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THE UNDISCOVERED SHORES.

BY EBEN E. REXFORD.

The roving winds blow landward
And bring the breath of blossoms
To us, from that strange country
We dream about so much.
The breath of sweetest blossoms
That bask in one long summer
Where sorrow never cometh,
And no one groweth old.

Sometimes, in dreaming moments,
I fancy that I see them
With sunshine all about them—
The undiscovered shores
I stretch my hands out, yearning
To touch the deathless flowers,
And drink of the clear fountains
So near, yet far away.

So near, that in those moments
The dropping of an eyelid
Brings them before my vision
To glad my weary eyes.
So far, I cannot find them
As sweetest things of earth are
Forever on beyond us,
And only seen in dreams.

Oh shores that haunt my fancies
In sleeping or in waking,
Bright with the bloom of summer
For ever, ever more,
You fill me with strange longing
As, in the cold, white winter,
We dream of roses' fragrance
And long for summer days.

Oh, mystic, far-off country!
When weary with its troubles
The heart, by some strange magic,
Can bring your shores in sight.
And listening to your voices,
We rest, and so grow stronger
To bear life's crosses onward
Until the day is done.
Then, when the tide sets seaward,
Our souls will cast their moorings
And sail out to discover
The shores of endless peace.

Freelance,

The Cavalier Corsair;

OR,

THE WAIF OF THE WAVE.

A Nautical Romance of the Early Years of the Nineteenth Century.

BY COL. PRENTISS INGRAHAM,
AUTHOR OF "THE CRETAN ROVER," "MERLE,
THE MUTINEER," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER I.

A GRAVE BETWEEN THEM.

LIKE a flood of silver light the moon's rays streamed down from a cloudless sky, and bathed land and sea in its halo of dreamy luster. The winds had died away, and the waves broke with muffled sound upon the pebbly beach, while in the background the dark line of forest echoed to the shrill notes of songsters—the mock-birds of the South, trilling forth their melody, as though in joyful admiration of the calm beauty of the scene.

Along the curving shores of the Gulf, here and there gleam from the magnolia forests, the snowy walls of a plantation villa, surrounded upon either side with spreading acres, tiled by the dark hands of the slave, whose white cottages are visible in the distance.

In front of these homesteads, the abodes of wealthy and aristocratic Southerners, lying at anchor upon the waters of the Gulf, are visible yachts of various sizes and rig, but with sails furled for the night, and no one visible upon their decks, for the world seems to have sunk to sleep under the calm influence of the hour.

Along the shore, and in front of the villas, winds a broad carriage-drive, and in the distance appears a horseman, slowly riding along, the hoofs of his steed falling lightly upon the dusty road.

At length he halts in front of a massive gateway leading into the handsome grounds of a villa situated back from the road.

Peering through the foliage he beholds a light in one of the windows, and from his lips break the words:

"It is the signal! she will be there."
Quietly he enters the gate, closing it without a sound behind him, and then leaving the drive that approaches the house, he skirts the fence, and rides toward a distant clump of trees, through which patches of white glimmer in the moonlight.

Nearer and nearer he approaches the clump of trees, using his spurs to force his horse on, for the animal seems to dread some danger lurking in the dark covert, or, with the peculiar instinct of dumb brutes, dreading to approach the spot where the dead lay at rest.

Presently through the foliage a white fence was visible, surrounding the marble monuments erected over those who had sunk to sleep forever; but, apparently with no superstitious feeling regarding a cemetery, the horseman urged his horse forward, and springing to the ground threw the bridle-rein over a post.

As he did so the animal started with a loud snort, but a word from his master calmed him. What had caused the sudden fright of the steed was certainly sufficient to cause human nature to become momentarily unnerved, for a form, clad in white, advanced from the shadow of a marble tomb directly toward the horseman, who nimbly sprang over the low fence and said earnestly:

"Lucille, my darling, you are a brave little girl to meet me here," and he drew the slender form toward him, and, bending over, imprinted a kiss upon the upturned face.

"It is not a cheerful place, Launcelot, for a lovers' tryst, yet I do not fear my dead ancestors, for I have never harmed them; but then I had an idea that our other rendezvous was known, and hence wrote you to come here."

"And I would have come anywhere to meet you, Lucille; but has anything arisen of late to arouse your suspicions?"

"Yes, my father seems to watch me, and yesterday forbade me to go, after nightfall, to the arbor on the cliff; but tell me, Launcelot, when will our meetings be no longer secret?"



"Launcelot Grenville, I curse you!"

"To-morrow, Lucille, I intend to seek your father and tell him of my love for you; he, as I before told you, knows who I am, though you do not, other than what I have told you regarding myself."

"And I have kept my promise and never made one inquiry regarding Mr. Launcelot Vertner, the handsome young gentleman who saved my life, and then stole my heart," said the maiden, playfully.

"You will find, Lucille, that I have deceived you in one thing only, but I did so with no dishonorable motives, I pledge you."

"Circumstances over which you and I had no control caused me to beg you to keep our meetings a secret for the present, and a fear of losing you perhaps made me err in this; but to-morrow you shall know all, for, having been North at school, since you were a very little girl, the rumors of the neighborhood are unknown to you."

"I hate gossip, Launcelot, and frequently have to hush up old Mammy Chloe, who, like many other old negroes, likes to chat about the affairs of others; but to-morrow you will see papa!"

"Yes, and Lucille, you will still love me, come what may?"

"Never can I love any one else, Launcelot; but you are sad; do you dread trouble?" and Lucille laid her hand gently upon the man's shoulder, while the moonlight, streaming down upon them, made a picture worthy the artist's brush.

The maiden was scarcely more than seventeen, with a Madonna-like face of wondrous beauty, and a tall, willowy form, perfectly molded.

She was dressed in white, and her embroidered skirt trailed over the dew-gemmed grass, while a mossy worsted wrap encircled her shoulders, and half hid the masses of golden hair and haughty head.

The man was six feet in height, as straight as an arrow, full-chested, with broad shoulders, and a form that was not only elegant, but denoted great strength and activity.

He was dressed in a riding-suit, top-boots, and a gray slouch hat, the broad brim being turned up, permitting his face to be visible.

And it was a face that few could look upon and not admire—a face of beauty in every outline, blended with nobleness and calm dignity, a dignity that amounted almost to sternness, when the features were in repose.

The complexion was dark; the hair and long, drooping mustache, black, and the eyes restless and full of fire.

Replying to the maiden's question, the man said, slowly:

"It seems almost too much happiness, Lucille, when I think that I may win you as my wife, and bitter obstacles are before us; but we will hope for the best. Now you must not re-

main longer out in the night air, and to-morrow our fate will be sealed."

"Devil incarnate! this night shall your fate be sealed."

The words rung out loud and stern on the night air, and a dark form bounded from the shadow of a tree and confronted the lovers, an upraised arm and knife in hand.

But, quick as was his spring, and taken by surprise as he was, the man thrust Lucille to one side, and a pistol gleamed in his hand, aimed directly at the heart of the assailant.

"Drop that knife, Colonel Darrington, or I will kill you!"

"For Heaven's sake, do not fire, Launcelot; it is my father!" and the trembling maiden sprang between the two men.

Instantly her lover lowered his pistol, while he said, sadly:

"Forgive me, Lucille; for the moment I forgot that he was your father, and only looked upon him as the lifetime foe of my race."

"Ay, Launcelot Grenville, and from this moment your foe unto death."

"Now, in the presence of my daughter, there must be no scene; but to-morrow, sir, you shall hear from me, and the sun shall set upon one Darrington or Grenville less."

"Oh, Launcelot, are you a Grenville?" cried Lucille, half shrinking away.

"Yes, Lucille; I told you that there were bitter barriers between our love for each other—I am Launcelot Vertner Grenville," said the young man calmly.

"And you love this man, Lucille?" cried the father, turning toward his daughter.

"I do, father, with all my heart and soul."

"God bless you, Lucille; and, sir, I love her daughter—hold, and hear me—I love her with the honor of a true man, and I would ask you and her to let the dead past bury its dead, and the names of Darrington and Grenville become united."

"Never, sir, never!"

"Stay, Colonel Darrington, and remember that I am the one that is offering the right hand of fellowship to the man who killed my father."

"Father, this gentleman saved my life, for he it was who saved me the day I was kidnapped by the coast pirates; he it was who attacked them single-handed, killed two of their number and rescued me."

"Great God! is this true, Lucille?" and the strong man staggered back as though dizzy with overwhelming emotion.

"It is true, father; I told you that a horseman passing, and doubtless a traveler, came to my aid, and I told you the truth, for only days after, when out riding, did I meet him, and from that time on we met often, until I learned to love him with all the devotion of my heart."

"And, Colonel Darrington, fearing that Lucille would turn from me in horror, knowing me as Lance Grenville, I gave her part of my name, that of Launcelot Vertner, and it was my intention to-morrow to seek you and ask that the past might be forgotten."

"And again I say—never!"

"Father, I love him, and he loves me; he has as much, if not more, as I remember the history of the fearful vendetta between our families, to forgive that and you and I, so listen to our appeal, father, and let the past be buried forever."

The maiden's voice was plaintive and appealing, and approaching her father she rested a hand upon either shoulder, and looked beseechingly into his white, stern face.

But the devil of his nature had complete ascendancy, and in hoarse, cutting tones, he said:

"I swear it! Your life, or mine, Lance Grenville!"

"Come, Lucille."

The maiden quickly sprang from him to the side of her lover and throwing her arms around his neck, she cried passionately:

"Oh, Launcelot! Launcelot! This is the end of my happy dream of love! Farewell! forever, forever!"

Drawing her quickly toward him he pressed a kiss upon her cold lips, and turning away sprang into his saddle, and dashed swiftly from the scene, urging his splendid horse, by a mighty leap, over the picket fence that surrounded the handsome grounds of the Darrington villa, and flying down the road at a mad pace that proved how his noble heart was torn with grief and despair.

"I swear it! Your life, or mine, Lance Grenville!"

"Come, Lucille."

The maiden quickly sprang from him to the side of her lover and throwing her arms around his neck, she cried passionately:

"Oh, Launcelot! Launcelot! This is the end of my happy dream of love! Farewell! forever, forever!"

Presently the rumble of wheels awoke him from his reverie, and glancing up he beheld what, in his time, he had never seen before—the well-known carriage of the Grenvilles, coming up to the door of his home.

Instantly he was upon his feet, his face livid, when from the vehicle sprang a young man, clad in the attire of an officer in the United States Navy.

Both men knew each other well by sight, but never before had a word passed between them.

Ascending the steps, the young officer said, coldly, though bowing with politeness:

"Colonel Darrington, I believe?"

"Yes, sir, and I address Lieutenant Arthur Grenville."

"You do, sir, and I have called to ask, Colonel Darrington, if you intended it as a personal insult to me when you named, in your affair with my brother, Mr. Rosal Abercrombie as your second—a person whom I certainly do not look upon as a gentleman, and will hold no communication with."

"You can take it as you choose, Lieutenant Grenville, and, after my meeting with your brother, I am perfectly willing to hold myself answerable to you," was the quiet reply of Ferd Darrington.

"It is my desire, sir, that your meeting with me be prior to that with my brother, and, as I decline to act with the second you have named, we can arrange the time and place for ourselves personally."

"Ah, I see your drift, sir. You wish, if possible, by killing me, to prevent a meeting between myself and Mr. Lance Grenville," said Colonel Darrington, with a sneer.

"You guess aright, sir. Knowing the immediate cause of quarrel between you and my brother, I fear that he will not attempt your life, and that you, in your merciless nature, should spare him, I have no idea, so I desire to place the meeting on a more equal footing, by being the first to face you."

"I will willingly oblige you, Lieutenant, after I have met your brother, but peremptorily decline doing so before, and as you object to Mr. Abercrombie, and I wish to place no obstacle in the way of my hostile meeting with Mr. Lance Grenville, I will refer you to Mr. Van Loo as my second."

Arthur Grenville bowed, and, with a look of disappointment upon his face, entered his carriage and drove away.

As the vehicle drew up for the footman to open the gate, a slender form suddenly sprang to the window, and Arthur Grenville beheld one of the most beautiful faces he had ever looked upon.

It was now white, the eyes were red with weeping, and the traces of deep sorrow rested upon every feature, and still the face was exquisitely lovely.

"Ah, sir, beg Launcelot Grenville not to kill my father!"

The words and voice were pleading, and Arthur Grenville seemed moved with pity, while he answered sadly:

"Alas, Miss Darrington, I fear that it will be the other way; but I will do all in my power, for your sake and my brother's, to prevent a fatal termination."

"God bless you," and stepping back Lucille allowed the carriage to go on, while she retraced her way to the mansion, keeping a hedge between herself and the eye of her father, who still paced the piazza.

Having objected to the young man named as Colonel Darrington's first second, on account of his wild and dissolute character, Arthur Grenville could find no fault with Paul Van Loo, a wealthy young planter, and a friend of both himself and brother, and he accordingly sought him out and a meeting was arranged for sunrise the following morning, at a lonely grove upon a point that jutted out into the Gulf.

Before the sun arose on the following day, the Grenville carriage, with its negro coachman and footman in livery, rolled along rapidly to the field, where, ten years before, the father of Lance and Arthur had fallen by the hand of Ferd Darrington, and where, for three generations the Darringtons and Grenvilles had faced each other in the deadly vendetta, and always with fatality to one name or the other.

It was a bitter feud, that had begun half a century before, when a Grenville had been the successful rival of a Darrington for the hand of a beauty and heiress, and had eventually ended in bloodshed, the mantle of hate descending like an heirloom from father to son, until at last two of the name had met and loved each other.

So impatient was Ferd Darrington to meet the man who had dared to love his daughter, that the brothers found him and his second already upon the field, they having come there upon horseback, accompanied by a negro servant who bore the deadly weapons to be used in the affray.

Bowing coldly to each other as they met, the two seconds then walked one side, while Colonel Darrington impatiently paced to and fro, an evil glitter in his eye, and Lance Grenville leaned against a tree, his arms folded, his face pale, but emotionless, and his eyes gazing afar off upon the gulf, as though striving to look into the great beyond and behold the fate in store for him.

How he would have shrunk in horror from that future, that he read in those blue waters the destiny that awaited him.

"Colonel Darrington, Lieutenant Grenville informs me that his brother was the one who rescued your daughter from the coast pirates, some months ago, is that fact?"

Paul Van Loo turned to his principal.

"I am, sir, and I am surprised that Mr. Grenville should endeavor to shun this meeting by hedging himself behind a favor rendered to me and mine," was the haughty retort.

"You mistake, sir," Mr. Grenville is represented by his brother, who, in the hope of ending this affair without a fatal termination, told me of the circumstance which none of us in the neighborhood before suspected, and, believing that, if known, you, that you owed to Mr. Lance Grenville the life, and perhaps more, of your daughter, this present difficulty might be averted, I spoke as I did."

"I thank you, Van Loo, for your good intentions, but nothing that Mr. Grenville has ever done, or could do, will mitigate the slightest degree my hatred for himself and name, and you will oblige me by immediately making arrangements for the duel."

Paul Van Loo seemed surprised, and drawing a sword from its scabbard tested its temper, while Arthur Grenville walked toward his brother, who had not seemed to hear the effort made at a reconciliation between himself and his enemy.

A few moments more, and throwing aside their coats the two men stood facing each other, swords in hand, for, as the challenged party, Lance Grenville had chosen those weapons, and his motive for doing so was soon evident, for, a superb master in fence, he had determined to disarm his antagonist and give him the life.

A few passes, and the blade of Colonel Darrington was twisted from his hand; but, without following up his advantage, Lance Grenville lowered the point of his weapon, and said, calmly:

"For the sake of Lucille, sir, I will give you your life."

"As my life I will not accept at your hands, sir, and as you have proven my master with the sword, the pistol will place us upon a more equal footing," and Ferd Darrington was white with rage, and seeing that he was determined, Paul Van Loo had no alternative but to take from their velvet case the long dueling pistols his principal had insisted upon bringing along.

With a bow, Lance Grenville signified his acceptance of the weapons, and a second meeting, and soon the two splendid-looking men again faced each other at ten paces apart.

"Here, Lance, and for God's sake, do not let that man kill you," and Arthur Grenville placed the loaded pistol in his brother's hand.

Lance Grenville made no reply, but a grim smile crossed his face, and he stood like a statue awaiting the word.

"It soon came, given by Paul Van Loo:

"Gentlemen, are you ready?"

Both men bowed.

"Fire!"

With the word one, the pistol of Ferd Darrington exploded, and a dull thud was heard, while Lance Grenville started slightly, and moved one step backward; but, instantly, he recovered himself, and suddenly raising his pistol fired above his head at a red bird—in him a fit songster for that scene—that sat singing in a tree above the heads of the two men.

Instantly the red bird fell from his perch, his head severed by the bullet from Lance Grenville's pistol—a splendid specimen of marksmanship.

Paul Van Loo sprang to the side of Colonel Darrington, crying:

"Colonel, you saw his shot! He has twice saved your life, and I beg now that this affair end here."

The white lips of Ferd Darrington parted, and the words were hissed out:

"Demand another fire! Load those pistols again, Van Loo!"

"It rests with Mr. Grenville, whether he will meet you again," said Paul Van Loo, evidently hurt at the determined hate of his principal.

"My brother has twice risked his life, and twice spared that of Colonel Darrington. I will not consent to another fire," said Lieutenant Grenville hotly.

"Then I shall hold him responsible whenever and wherever I meet him, after leaving this field," came the quick retort.

"Arthur, if it has to come to chance encounter to settle this affair, let it end here. I will exchange shots again with Colonel Darrington," said Lance, and his lips slightly quivered as though with some inward emotion that was choking him.

Again the two men faced each other, and once more the word was given to fire, and both pistols were discharged together.

As the smoke drifted away, Colonel Darrington was discovered lying his full length upon the ground, while Lance Grenville stood with folded arms, gazing at him with no reply, and with an expression of intense sorrow in his face.

"I have killed him, Arth, and Lucille will now curse me."

There was a depth of feeling in the words that proved how terribly the strong man suffered, and Arthur Grenville made no reply.

"Yes, he is dead. But, Grenville, you acted most nobly; are you not hurt?" and Paul Van Loo arose from the side of the dead man and approached Lance Grenville.

"At the first fire his bullet struck here—see!"

This turned its course from my heart, and it gave me a mere flesh wound, and he took from his breast-pocket a miniature set in a heavy gold case.

But the glass was shattered to atoms, the gold indented, and the face that had been painted

thereon, was deeply marred by the bullet, and yet both Paul Van Loo and Arthur Grenville saw that it was the miniature likeness of Lucille Darrington that had saved the life of Lance Grenville!

Take the carriage, Paul, to bear his body home, his shot was fatal, and your horses," said Lance Grenville sadly, and mounting the very animal ridden there by Colonel Darrington, the unhappy man rode away, followed by his brother, who felt deeply for him in his sorrow, yet secretly, that the affair had terminated as it had.

In the meantime Paul Van Loo, aided by the servants, had placed the body in the carriage, which at once rolled rapidly away toward the Darrington villa, where the longing, staring eyes of Lord and Lady Darrington, and with a cry of joy she sprung to her feet, for she recognized the vehicle, and believed that those who had gone forth with deadly intent had returned as friends.

Eagerly she watched the carriage, saw it halt before the grand stairs, the door open, and then, as her eyes fell on the dark, dead face of her father, she uttered a shriek of anguish and fell heavily upon the floor, where she lay like one whose life-cords had snapped in twain.

CHAPTER III.

A WOMAN'S CURSE.

TOWARD the close of day, several years after the death of Colonel Darrington by the hand of Launcelot Grenville, a rakish-looking schooner was drowsing in from the Gulf, and heading for a small cove, sheltered by a heavily-wooded point of land of what is now the coast of the State of Mississippi.

That the schooner was an armed craft was evident at a glance, as her hull, and rig, for vessels of her long, narrow hull, and single-stem masts that raked far aft, with an almost piratical air, were not found in the merchant service.

As she drew nearer the land, a person would have discerned upon her decks four guns to a broadside, and a host of men, some mounted upon a pivot, while a crew of sixty men were idly grouped about, looking at the pretty villa plantations that dotted the coast.

Upon the quarter-deck were several officers, who, like the men, had a foreign air, and whose dark faces, medium-sized features, and bright eyes denoted that they were of Mexican origin.

The officers wore uniforms, elaborately trimmed with gold lace, and the sailors were attired in blue shirts, white duck pants, and skull-caps encircled by a quarter of a mile, which was embroidered in green silk a serpent.

One person upon the quarter-deck stood near the helmsman, directing him how to steer, and that this man commanded the destinies of the schooner was evident at a glance.

Possessing a tall, commanding form, attired in a costly uniform, and with a strikingly handsome face, in which a settled sadness was blended with sternness, he was a man both to fear and admire, and always to respect.

Scarcely his eyes ran along the shores, and the wind being favorable he gave an order to the helmsman to head toward a certain point, where the white walls of a villa gleamed through a dense mass of foliage.

As the schooner neared the shore the sun went down behind the western horizon, and half a score of small pleasure yachts that were sailing upon the waters, filled with gay parties, headed for their respective anchorages, and darkness settled upon the sea, just as the armed vessel swept up into the wind and dropped anchor within a quarter of a mile from the land.

Instantly the sails were lowered and furled, and the schooner rode quietly upon the waves, as silent as though the three-score men upon her decks had gone to rest.

For a moment he passed away, and then a red-dish glare was visible on the eastern horizon, and into the clear skies sailed the moon, convoked by fleets of stars upon her way.

As the silvery beams of light marked a path across the rippling waters, a boat was lowered over the schooner's side, and a single personage, who seized the oars and pulled with a strong, quick stroke toward the shore.

As the moonlight fell upon his face it displayed the officer who had guided the schooner to her anchorage.

Landing under the shelter of the cliff he dragged the boat half out of the water, by a slight effort of his great strength, and quickly ascended to the hill above.

Here he paused, and a shudder ran through his frame, as he stood with his arms gazing down upon an open, grass-covered spot in front of him.

"Here am I again upon the scene that has proven so fatal to my name," he muttered, in a low, deep voice.

"A spot where I buried every hope for the future, and a love that almost drives me to madness when I recall what I lost; but, God knows I was driven to it, and that a bitter curse has dogged my footsteps."

For a moment he remained in silence, and his face grew cold and stern, as he seemed brooding over the past; then again he spoke in the same deep tones:

"What devilish impulse has brought me here I cannot tell; but certain it is an irresistible desire has made me come again to the scenes where I have suffered so much."

"A short mile from here, and but a year ago, I stood upon a gallows, condemned to die, a Cain-accursed man; but, through the love and courage of my faithful slaves, I escaped, and my own hand struck down the base wretch who had sworn my life away as my brother's murderer—that dearly-loved brother who now lives doubtless happy in the love of the woman who so charged me as guilty of the crime of Cain."

And he glanced down the coast, where lights glimmered from the windows of a lordly house, once his own.

"Ah me; how bitterly cruel Fate has dogged my steps, and now led me back to this spot—and why?"

"God knows why; but I am the football of destiny and must not hesitate now but go where-soever my guardian angel, be she good or evil, would lead me—and she leads me yonder."

He turned abruptly and glanced in the other direction from the villa, where the lights were visible, and there his eyes rested upon another house half a mile distant—the place toward which the schooner had headed when a league out from the land.

With a hasty step he strode away from the spot that seemed to recall such embittered memories, and crossing the highway approached a massive gateway that seemed crumbling rapidly to decay by total neglect.

Springing over the fence he stood hesitating in the grounds, where were overgrown with rank weeds and underbrush, while back-few hundred paces arose dark and gloomy the walls of a large mansion, now almost hidden by the dense growth of trees surrounding it.

"There she lived, and—perhaps died; but whether she is alive or dead I will soon know, for yonder burying-ground will tell the story."

"Was said she committed suicide after she knew her father fell by my hand, and then that story was contradicted and none knew where she had gone."

"She cannot live in yonder old mansion, which Time is rapidly making a ruin of; but I shall see—Ha!"

Quickly he bounded into the shadow of the massive gateway as the roll of wheels came to his ears, and an instant later a carriage appeared on the highway, while its occupants were discussing the presence of the rakish-looking schooner lying at anchor so near inland, and which the moonlight plainly revealed, floating as silent as a coffin upon the waters.

"It looks like a pirate vessel, and I will not have an instant's sleep until it sails away," said a merry voice in the vehicle, while another answered in girlish tones:

"Oh, I would so like it to be a buccaneer craft, commanded by a dashing, handsome young chief."

Then the carriage rolled on out of hearing of the man crouching in the shadow, and the moonlight showed a grim look upon his face as he arose to his full height again.

"Ah, no, my fair friends, yonder craft does not float the skull and crossbones at her peak, though Heaven knows I have had cause enough to make a very devil out of me; but I must not stand here," and he again pushed on, carefully, though fearfully approaching the house.

Look habitual to his age, which gives the idea beneath his feet, he walked noiselessly round the piazza to the rear of the mansion and there suddenly halted, as a dim light shone from the window.

With step as noiseless and stealthy as that of a panther he crept up and glanced in at the open window.

He beheld a room that had once been handsomely furnished, but the furniture was now worn and faded, yet still had an air of neatness upon it.

A table, upon which stood a lamp, sat an old negress in a calico dress and bandanna handkerchief, engaged in knitting, while she hummed in a low voice a camp-meeting air, keeping slow time with her needles.

Upon a chair near the broad fireplace, which glowed a few coals, was an old negro man, his head frosted with the snows of three-score and ten years.

He held a pipe between his lips and was gazing into the fire with that listless, thoughtless look habitual to his age, which gives the idea that those nearing the grave are ever looking back into the bygone with memories only sad.

From the room were two doors, one evidently leading out upon a back piazza and the other into what appeared a bedchamber.

"Here I can learn what I would know about her; but I will first seek yonder, for I would not be seen here by any one, if I can avoid it."

So saying the man retraced his way around the piazza, and descending the steps went toward the grounds in the direction of a distant grove of trees.

Crossing an open lawn or field he skulked rapidly along as the moonlight fell full upon him, and hastily darted into the shadow of the trees.

It was the same grove that had been the fatal trysting-place of Launcelot Grenville and Lucille Darrington years before; but here, as upon the mansion, rested an air of neglect and decay, for the little fence that inclosed the burying-ground was half-broken down, and

Daniel had one son, John, who was always her slave. He would do anything to win a smile from her, and thought no task too difficult to please her. What then more natural when they grew older than that they should be married? Daniel and his wife advised it. John loved her—she could remember that now, and she was but sixteen.

She wondered, vaguely, if she could have ever been that little Lucille, who watched for the coming of John from his labors—rough, unpolished John.

And yet she had longings even then of a higher life. The common surroundings annoyed her, and their uncouth actions and coarser language rasped her own ideas of the fitness of things. John, poor John, was always kind—wearisome, but tender of his wife, his Lucille.

One day in winter he had had her good-by for a few days, he said. He must go fifty miles to attend to some business, but father and mother would care for her while he was gone. Day followed day, and snows piled their flakey whiteness high over all. John's father watched anxiously for his boy who came not at the time appointed. Two weeks passed, and they were told that John was missing. He could not be found; he had never reached the end of his journey, and he was dead. How he died they knew not, but search proved unavailing.

They pitied the poor young wife, so sudden! they said. As for her, she felt an irresistible longing to get away. Now that John was dead she felt that she could never live there always, with the toil and hardships of her life. She wanted to come East, of which she had heard rumors as from a fairy tale. Unknown to Daniel and his wife she made arrangements to leave.

When she reached St. Louis, she wondered, suddenly, how she was to live. But, she would find work; some one surely, would employ her. While waiting in the depot she espied a man who looked kind, she thought. She asked him if he knew where she "could get work." Mr. Strathmore, the patrician face took on an amused expression, as if he was an Intelligence Office he told her afterward.

But on looking more attentively, he stared with undisguised surprise. Here was a type of beauty in this wildflower flower he had searched for vainly. She told him not her real story, but said she had come a long distance—that the past held no pleasant memories, and she wanted to forget it.

She married Ralph Strathmore, who took her abroad where teachers and travel added polish and elegance to her uncultivated mind. Her gratitude to him grew to love, of the deepest intensity. And the thought suddenly came to her—what if John had not died after all! No one saw his death; might it not be possible—but no! she put the idea away, shudderingly. She was happy in Ralph's love; the past had been so dreary it must not be raised again. That she had done wrong she knew. She never told her husband, who kindly said, if there was anything unpleasant in his history not to relate it; he loved her and believed her perfect and good.

And the face of the fisherman she saw that afternoon was John Simpson, her husband! No, she would not call him that. He was here. What is to prevent him from searching for her or telling Ralph?

"It must not be, it shall not be!" moaned the wretched woman, walking excitedly up and down. "I can not bear to see Ralph's face grow stern and white with the knowledge that I have deceived him."

The next day she did not drive out; she scarcely looked from the window for fear his face would meet her. But still she thought it might be barely possible he did not know her. That he would pursue his humble occupation without daring to thrust himself into the presence of her and fashion.

She walked to the mirror and surveyed herself. Would he know her? She saw there a tall figure, graceful and undulating. A glory of golden hair, straight eyebrows above brown, glowing eyes—eyes that to-night held a startled look in their somber depths and a pathos in their brown shadows. A dress of satin, rose-tinted, with delicate lace draped over it and palpitating with filmy whiteness.

"You look like Venus emerging from the ocean," said her husband admiringly. "Your dress has the rosy hue of the sea shell, the lace drifts over it like the foam of the waters, and your pearls are from the empire of Neptune himself. How peerlessly beautiful you are!"

"That night, after a wait, Mrs. Strathmore and her partner stepped to one of the long windows opening on the porch. Looking in outside was the face of all faces she dreaded to see. Gazing in fixedly, with an expression of joy shining over his rough features, and staring in a quiet, dazed way, as if undecided whether to come nearer or not.

"What ails you, Lucille? You look as if you had seen a ghost. Did your ponies run away, or was it the happiness of my anxious inquiry?"

"My ponies behaved admirably. I feel tired; that is all."

"I shall not let you go alone again. I shall only feel safe when you are with me."

And I only feel safe when you are with me. Ralph, even if you hear anything that would make you hate me!" she asked, eagerly.

"I will always love you, pet," he said, earnestly, as he stooped and kissed her. "What made you imagine such an absurdity?"

"I cannot tell you. If ever I lose your love I have nothing else to live for. I wish you would take me away from here, Ralph. I am sick of it all. The hollow gaiety and society-places that have no depth. Let us go to some quiet country place where we can have rest."

"Rest," she repeated to herself—"would she ever again know rest in this world?"

"Leave Newport, when you were so anxious to come? Where you reign queen of society and leave it for some rural retreat? I am too proud of you to be selfish enough to hide your precious self in seclusion."

"Are you proud of me, Ralph, of your wife? Do you never have a regret that you married me, penniless and friendless?"

"Never a regret, never. But, Lucille, you certainly must be ill. You have lost entirely that elegant repose of manner I so admire in you. You tremble and are pallid."

"It is nothing—a slight indisposition, that is all," and she passed her hand wearily across her eyes, as if to shut out the face of the man by the shore.

"No, I will not go down this evening but remain in my room," she said, in answer to her husband's inquiry whether she was ready for supper.

When he left she sunk down in a chair with a stifled moan. It had come at last! The haunting fear that had followed her for years was now confirmed. The ghostly doubt would not be buried. She had piled miles of distance and years of absence upon its grave; and here it was in the face of her husband.

She thought of her childhood. Her life seemed mapped out before her. And, try as she would to forget to-night, a drawing fascination kept the one idea constantly before her.

A rude miner's hut she was born. Father and mother she remembered but dimly; they had died when she was a tender child. She would have been homeless had not Daniel Simpson and his wife, kindly neighbors, given her a home and place in their hearts. They were rough, but friendly people, and she remembered, with a little pang of abatement, had made her their idol. The best their cabin afforded, or any small luxury they could possess, was given to pretty Lucille, as they called her.

Daniel had one son, John, who was always her slave. He would do anything to win a smile from her, and thought no task too difficult to please her. What then more natural when they grew older than that they should be married? Daniel and his wife advised it. John loved her—she could remember that now, and she was but sixteen.

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"Are you proud of me, Ralph, of your wife? Do you never have a regret that you married me, penniless and friendless?"

"Never a regret, never. But, Lucille, you certainly must be ill. You have lost entirely that elegant repose of manner I so admire in you.

to remark that I believe in them same articles, pilgrims."

"What? Impossible! You believe in the supernatural, Hilarity?" exclaimed a half-dozen of us in chorus.

"Yes, I'll allow I do," he replied; "leastways, a fellow after believe suthin' o' the kind, when he's bin haunted at every turn for five years."

"You don't mean to say that you believe yourself to be haunted?" Tom Darling interrogated.

"I do, as sure's I'm settin' here. More'n that, I'm doozed. Oh, y' kin smile, but tain't allus ther wisest that may smile. Tell you about it, ef y'll lend me yer ear."

"Some five year ago I war a pretty spruce sorter chap, and all allowed I war a regular dandy an' a Zip Coon on ther fight."

"I war down in the City of Mexico, then, and it ain't w' much pride that I own that I war engaged in ther legitimate pursuit o' gambling. Few, indeed, were there in the Mexican metropolis, who were sharper at cards than myself."

"Well, as a natural consequence, I made money, and I spent it. None knew how better than I. I dressed in the height of fashion, drove nobly turnouts, and lived high. The hot-blooded Spanish-Mexican señoritas and señoritas threw themselves before me, and worshiped me. But women war'n't so farious in my line, and I so passed them by."

"During my experience as a gambler I met many of the titled Greasers, and where they were of money value, plucked them without mercy. Among them came a young, high-blooded cuss to me, of aristocratic family—a regular nabob, he war, with more power with the city officials than I had supposed, at first. He brought with him his sister, a handsome brunette of most attractive form and face, and I'd seen none more charmin' o' address in the city."

"Well, the proposition of this chap was that I must marry his sister, and support her, she in return aiding me to gamble, she being particularly lucky. But I war sure I refused, for I wasn't layin' in any Greaser, then, ef I knew myself. So I advised the Greaser to take his sister whence she came, and offer her to some of her countrymen."

"This he indignantly refused to do, and consequently I war to play for money, with the dark-skinned Mexican beauty. It was the intention between us to play until one or the other was cleaned out, and as the Mexican nabob was possessed of cash to the amount of ten thousand dollars, the tournament promised to be interesting."

"And it was, to some extent. We hired private apartments, and set to work. At the end of forty-eight hours I had won every peso that the Mexican had in the world. I was then commanded to marry Señora. I was, but I firmly refused. And I only escaped from the room by running my saber through the Mexican nabob, and hurling the señorita to the floor. And as I made my escape she hurled at me a frightful curse, pronounced my doom."

"It was with difficulty I escaped from the city of Mexico, for she caused a score of Greaser hellions to pursue and attack me. But I succeeded in laying them all out, and took myself to Toluca, supposing I had seen the last of my beautiful Mexican admirer. But I was mistaken. There, at Toluca, and at Santa Fé, I received notes from her, all of the same import, pronouncing my doom upon the tenth of July, 1877, which is now close at hand. To-morrow is the day of my doom."

"Pshaw! I see nothing supernatural," said "Judge" Hoyle. "Ef you are going to submit to death at the hands of a live woman you're a bigger fool than I took you for."

"Inez Marcia is not alive!" Old Hilarity said, solemnly. "It is her vengeful spirit that pursues me. No man can dissuade me from what is in my mind, a firm conviction. Why, man, have I not had enough proof? After leaving Santa Fé I went far up into the Rocky Mountains, the San Juan mines. She followed me, and confronted me in a gambling-saloon. Maddened with desperation, I shot her dead in her tracks, and fled the town to escape the Vigilantes."

"Next, one night, when I was at Del Norte, she appeared to me, and said to me, 'I see you. Nor did I leave the town until I see'd her six foot under ther sod. I had hopes, then, o' future rest, but I have never known it. At Cheyenne, while gambling, I received a stab in the back, and turned to see Inez Marcia flee from the room. And she has appeared to me off and on, ever since. That's no use o' talkin'; no human flesh could survive so many deaths, and it is her apparition that appears to me. I saw it last the night after this train left Cheyenne, and I made up my mind that I'm upon my last trail.'"

"And we found that the old guide was not to be dissuaded from this conviction. He had his mind resolutely set, and to all our endeavors at explanation, and to all our 'poohing,' he would simply nod in his way, grinning."

"No use o' tryin' ter git me out o' ther notion, boys," he would say. "To-morrow will prove that when a man's haunted and doomed that's no earthly power to save him."

"Some of the men were inclined to regard it as a hallucination on the part of the old man."

"And when he had gone out on his scout about camp, previous to turning in, we put our heads together, and resolved to watch sharply against any hazy confusion of the guide on the following day, for, thought we, should that day pass without the fulfillment of Old Hilarity's conviction, he would lose belief in his case."

"And so we did keep a close watch of him the next day."

"Jackson," said the old guide to me, about sundown, "do you think you shall ever go East, as far as New York State?"

"Upon answering him that such was my intention, he took his knife and severed a lock of hair from his head."

"I've got a sister out ther," he said, naming the directions, "and I would ask ye, as a favor, ter give the gal that lock as a dying gift from a prodigal brother."

The day passed without incident, and the wagons with their teams moved on, over the rolling prairie, in the broiling sunshine, which was somewhat alleviated in its heat by a cool, refreshing north-western breeze."

"At night we pitched camp on the western bank of Sage creek, where grazing and water were in abundance."

"During the day Old Hilarity had been more jolly than usual, but at the camp-fire circle, that night, he earned his sobriquet, for he was full of fun and merryisms in Hilarity. He sung, he told stories, and smoked, and seemed quite to have forgotten that his day of doom had come and was gradually going."

"At nine o'clock he rolled in his blanket, as did the rest of us, with the exception of Jimintas and Keefe, who went on guard, the former being specially detailed to keep watch of Hilarity during the night."

"When we awoke in the morning, the guide still lay motionless in his blanket, and upon examination we found that he was dead."

"We found no wounds or marks of violence, and nothing was left for us to decide than that, haunted by his strange hallucination, the old man had quietly died at the hour of his doom. The Mexican girl's ghost must have worked upon him like a mania, that resulted in final sleep."

"We buried him on the banks of Sage creek, and many travelers have noticed, and pondered over the green mound, at the head of which stands a pine board, marked."

"OLD HILARITY."

"THE Boston Post says that a man can get at Saratoga about two hundred different kinds of bad-tasting water, and this year's discoveries haven't begun."

"A CITIZEN of Fleming, Ky., fired at a rat, struck a keg of powder, blew his house to pieces, and had to jump into the river to keep from burning up. The rat remains unhurt."

IF I SHOULD DIE TO-NIGHT.

BY JORIE C. MALOTT.

If I should die to-night
Would all be well?
Would peace and rest be mine?
My heart, pray tell?
Would those I've loved so much
Grieve soft and low,
And kiss my cold face,
Whiter than snow?
And in the coming years
Not quite forget
The once familiar face,
Now calm and set?
And if I've grieved or wronged
One faithful heart,
Would not the silent lips
Assuage the smart?
And would this heart of mine
Forget its pain,
If I should die to-night,
Oh, Savior mine!
My heart assures me this,
That I am Thine!

The Pink of the Pacific;

OR,

The Adventures of a Stowaway.

BY OLIVER OPTIC.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE HOME OF THE COMMANDER.

THE captured proas and the prisoners were disposed of, and there was great rejoicing in Koti over the victory. Captain Fairfield was the most popular man in the town, and when he landed to report to the rajah, the people bowed down to him as though he had been a god. Pink remained in the cabin of the proa while he was absent. As the friend of the commander who had saved the proa in his rajah, he was treated with great consideration by the Dyaks left on board. He could not speak a word to them or to him; but they manifested their good will by signs and kindly deeds.

The wind was so light, and so often contrary in the bends of the river, that the Belle of the Bay made a long passage of her trip up the river. Pink had no difficulty in coming to the conclusion that her mission in this direction related to him. Her people had seen him on the platform of the commander's proa; and he believed that Captain Bodfield was unwilling to leave the coast of Borneo without him. But he was sorry to see the brig, for he had made up his mind that he could not return to her. He was not wanted, and it was too humiliating to remain on board under such circumstances. Captain Fairfield had spoken very kindly to him, and for some reason which Pink could not comprehend, he seemed to be deeply interested in him. He had charged him in the most explicit manner not to leave the proa in his absence; for he had a great deal to say to him as soon as they had time to talk. The wait thought it probable that the commander was lonely among so many strangers, and that he desired a companion who could speak his own language.

Pink allowed the cabin door to remain open. Once in a while he went to the bow of the proa to look out for the Belle of the Bay, for he had lost sight of her long before the arrival of the fleet behind the bends of the river. She was now in sight; but the wind had nearly died out, and she only drifted with the tide, which was nearly at the flood. He watched her till the proa began to swing around at the turn of the tide. The brig was over half a mile from town, and Pink was sure she would not be able to come up that night. He hoped Captain Fairfield would return soon, and take him to some place where he need not be obliged to meet any of his late shipmates.

He really loved Captain Bodfield; but he felt that he was his only friend on board; and he could not endure the thought of having Tom Dunwood regard him with hatred, and his father look upon him as an intruder. He would rather live with the monkeys in the jungle than lead such a life for a whole year; for this was the limit of the yacht's cruise. The commander of the forces and the Dyaks treated him very kindly; and this fact strengthened his determination to remain where he was; besides he wanted to know what Captain Fairfield was so anxious to say to him.

As he had anticipated, the brig soon came to anchor, and clewed up her top-sails, though they were not hoisted, indicating that she was not to remain long at her anchorage. Presently a boat put off from her, and pulled up the river. It was nearly sunset when it reached the town. Pink looked at it with interest; but he soon satisfied himself that Captain Bodfield was not in the stern-boat. Mr. Sanders, the second mate, was in charge of the boat; and Pink felt that he could get along better with him than with the captain.

There were ten proas made fast to the bank of the river in front of the town, including those captured by the commander and Sanders, went from one to another in search of Pink. But at last he came to the right one.

The wait saw the worthy second mate making all sorts of signs to the Dyaks on board to indicate that he wanted to find some one. Pink was rather amused at the struggles of Sanders to make himself understood; and for this reason he allowed him to continue his efforts longer than he would otherwise have done; but at last he put the second mate out of misery by showing himself.

"Ah, Pink, my hearty, I am glad to see you again!" exclaimed Sanders, the moment he got his eye upon him. "I can't speak a mite of this pigeon talk, and I did not know as I should be able to find you. It's all right now, so tumble into the boat, and go back to the brig."

"What's all right, Mr. Sanders?" asked Pink, placing himself on the gunwale of the proa.

"Mr. Dunwood is willing to have you come back on board," said Sanders.

"He was willing to let me stay before I left; but it was only because he couldn't spare Captain Bodfield."

"No matter for that; it's all right now. The captain says he will not sail without you."

"How is it with Tom Dunwood? Is he willing I should remain on board?"

"I don't know; and between you and me, Pink, nobody cares whether he is willing or not," said the second mate, in a low tone, for he did not care to have even the new hear him utter so treasonable a statement.

"Tom is the biggest man on board of the brig; and whatever he says is law to his father. I did everything I could to please him and his father; and all I got for it were kicks and cuffs. Tom would have thrown me overboard if he could."

"But they are all willing to have you come back now; at least, all but Tom, and I don't know but he is," pleaded Sanders.

"But I am not willing to go back," replied Pink, with emphasis.

"Why not?" asked the second mate, evidently astonished at this decision.

"I won't go where I'm not wanted."

"But you did go where you were not wanted when you went on board of the American Continent," added Sanders, who felt it to be his duty to argue the matter as well as he could.

"I behaved myself as well I could after I went on board; and they all liked me. If they hadn't I would have left her as soon as I got a chance," replied Pink, smartly. "Tom Dunwood hates me; and his father takes his part against me. I would rather live in the wilds of Australia than be kicked by Tom Dunwood, as I must let him do if I stay on board of the brig. I'm sorry to leave the captain; for he is the best friend I ever had on earth. Tell him I

like him first rate, but I can't go back to the brig."

Sanders argued like a sea lawyer; but he could not get any further; and once Pink to change his mind. He continued to reason with him till it was dark, and then reluctantly returned to the brig. He had not been gone ten minutes before Captain Fairfield came on board the proa. "Pink told him what had just occurred."

"I am glad you did not go, my lad; and if you had I should have chased the brig down the river in my swiftest proa," replied the commander.

"What for?" asked Pink, surprised at this answer.

"I will tell you by-and-by. The moment I saw you I felt—But no matter about that now. We will talk about it another time. I dine with the rajah, and he kept me longer than I wanted to stay with him. In fact he we have saved his dominion from invasion; for there was an army behind this fleet of proas we have captured and destroyed," said Captain Fairfield.

The commander displayed some emotion which Pink could not understand; but he quickly recovered his self-possession, and turning from the wait, he spoke to the crew of the proa. Immediately one of them cast off the rope that bound the vessel to the shore and the rowers took their places at the oars. In a few moments the proa was moving up the river in the gloom of the evening.

"Unless some of the people of the brig can speak the Dyak language, they will not be likely to find us where we are going," said the commander, as he seated himself beside Pink on the platform.

"I am glad of that, for I don't want to go back to the Belle of the Bay. I have stood almost everything; but I will not go where I am not wanted, and I will be kicked by Tom Dunwood whenever he takes a notion to do so," replied Pink.

"I have been in this place for ten years; and I have seldom had an opportunity to speak a word with the English and the Dutch. In fact he But I like these people; for they are not like so savage as they have appeared to you to be today. They have been fighting for their homes and country; and they have done bravely. When I first came here the Rajah of Koti was anxious to conquer the territory of his neighbors as any of these petty rulers are; but I persuaded him to turn his attention in another direction."

He has been developing the resources of his country, and he is doing considerable trade with the English and the Dutch. In fact he has grown very rich, and his wealth has excited the cupidity of the Rajah of Djama."

This is the third time we have defeated him; and I think he will not attempt the conquest again. I have defeated him three times in the last three days ago, about four miles from the town; but if they could have captured the batteries I have planted on the river, they might have succeeded better the next time. Now they have lost their last chance, and may leave this country now, for I desire to return to my native land before I die."

Pink listened with interest to the narrative of the commander; but he could not make out what he was so interested in him if he intended to return to his native land. While they were talking, the proa turned into a branch of the river, and after going a short distance up this stream, it came up to the bank in front of a house, situated in the midst of a grove. Even in the night, Pink could see that it was a beautiful region. Just above the house the stream widened into a broad lake, one whose tranquil surface floated a large schooner yacht.

"This is my home," said the commander. "But it is so dark that you can't see what sort of a place it is."

"I can see that it is a very nice place," replied Pink. "I suppose that vessel above belongs to you?"

"That is a yacht in which I came from Baltimore. I seldom use it now, though it is in excellent condition, and could be made ready for a voyage in a few days."

"I should think you would like her better than one of these proas, when you go for pleasure, or when you fight the enemy," added Pink.

"I can only go in her when the wind blows, but the proas can be rowed anywhere in the smooth waters of these rivers. But come with me, Pink, for I think you must want your dinner by this time."

"I think I could eat something if I had it," answered the hungry boy, as he followed Fairfield on shore.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE COMMANDER'S ONLY SON.

THE home of the commander was a sort of cottage, not unlike many Pink had seen in Australia, in the vicinity of the cities and large towns. It was built of bamboo, but it was lined with a substance which effectively kept out the moisture of that humid climate. In front of the house were broad verandas, where the occupant could enjoy the cool air in the shade. Pink followed the commander into a broad hall, where he was welcomed by a small army of Dyak servants, who seemed to be as glad to see him, as the people of Koti had been.

They entered a large apartment, partly furnished in European style, where Pink was invited to make himself entirely at home. In a short time his supper was ready, consisting mostly of fowls and fruits, of which he partook heartily, for Pink was one of that sort of boys who are always hungry. When the meal was finished, the commander conducted him to the apartment they had first entered.

"I dare say you are very tired, Pink," said Captain Fairfield, as he lighted his pipe, and seated himself at one of the latticed windows. "Not very tired, sir," replied Pink, who was hard to do," replied Pink, laughing at the idea that any one could think he should be tired, for he was not accustomed to this degree of consideration.

"You shall have a bath and a good bed to-night; and if you prefer not to have any to-night, you may go to your room at once," added the commander. "I am not afraid the people of the brig will find you here at present."

"I am not very tired; and I shall get rested while we are talking," answered Pink, who was very anxious to know why the commander was interested in him. "I have been wanting to ask you why you said 'Merciful Heaven,' the moment you first saw me."

"You look just like some one I knew and loved," replied the captain.

"Who was that?"

"I will tell you in due time."

"Then you called Mr. Dunwood a villain, it seemed to me just the thing to say to him before," added Pink, with a degree of simplicity that amused his new friend.

"I could not very well have believed he was a villain without knowing him before. You told me just about your history; and now I want you to go over it all again, and tell me all you can remember."

"I can't remember anything that happened before I was hurt," and the wait proceeded to tell the commander about the fall in the circus. Then he related minutely all the events of his experience in Australia, on board of the American Continent, and in the Belle of the Bay. Captain Fairfield listened to him with the deepest interest, and was so absorbed in the narrative, that he allowed his pipe to go out half a dozen times, and he forgot it as often. He asked a great many questions, which Pink answered to the best of his ability.

"I suppose I know all about you that you know yourself," said the captain, when Pink had finished his yarn, as he called it.

"Yes, sir; I have told you everything I can think of. I can't recollect anything back of the time when I was in the circus, swinging on the slack rope, turning somersets, and standing on my head on the head of the great American rider. They gave me enough to eat, which was

more than I could get after I ran away from them; and for this reason I was sorry I left them. But they used to whip, and kick and cuff me."

"Poor fellow!" exclaimed the commander, with much emotion. "I should like to see the man that abused you."

"They only did it to make me do things; and when I did them in the ring, the crowd used to cheer their hands in and yell, just as these Dyaks do; and it always makes me feel good."

"And you don't know how you happened to be in Australia?" asked Captain Fairfield, very anxiously.

"Not a thing, sir. I had almost forgot how to talk, but Captain Bodfield taught me a great deal while we were together in the whaler-ship," replied Pink. "But I am doing all the talking, sir; and you haven't told me anything about yourself."

Pink chuckled as he spoke, and rising from the divan on which he was reclining, he went to the captain, and seated himself on a stool at his feet. The magnetism of the commander was having its full effect upon the boy.

"I will not keep anything back from you, my lad. But you must tell me what you have to say, and we will talk some more in the morning," replied Captain Fairfield, placing his hand upon the head of the wait.

"I am not tired, sir; I could sit up all night to hear you tell what you have to say," protested Pink. "I don't know why you should care anything at all about me."

"Every look you give me, and every word you utter reminds me of another who is no longer of this world. You are the very image of the person," answered the commander; and Pink could feel the tremor of his frame, as he leaned upon his knee, and as the hand of his new friend pressed his forehead.

"Who was it, sir?"

"I can soon satisfy myself that you are or are not the boy I take you to be," added the captain, as he snapped a bell upon a table within his reach.

The summons was answered by a Dyak boy, to whom the commander gave his commands. Presently the servant returned with two candles, which he set on the table, for the room was only dimly lighted by a hanging lamp.

"Now, my lad, will you take off your coat?" continued the captain.

"Take off my coat?" exclaimed Pink. "To be sure, will you let me say so. I will take my skin off if you like."

"Only your coat if you please," replied the man in white.

"You have been good to me; and I will do anything you say," added Pink, throwing off his jacket.

The commander covered his face with his hands, and seemed to be lost in thought for a moment. He was more agitated than Pink could see, and he did not know what to do. The reason for this, though the wait could not help making up his mind that something very strange was about to happen.

"If you are chilly, put it on for a moment," continued the captain, uncovering his face, and looking very earnestly at his guest.

"Chill? I am not cold," laughed Pink. "Then hear me for a moment before I go any further. I take you to be a certain person."

"And so I am."

"Doubtless you are; but whether you are the one I mean is the question. If you are that person, I shall find upon your right shoulder a birth-mark something in the shape of a star."

As he spoke the commander took a pencil from his pocket, and marked upon the corner of a newspaper that lay on the table the shape of the character he described. It required a little stretch of the imagination to call it a star; but it had five points, though all but one of them were round-pointed.

"I shall find that upon your right shoulder," continued the commander. "On the left I shall find the letter F, the foot of the letter pointing down at an angle of forty-five degrees toward the spine. If I do not find these marks upon you, then you are not the person I take you to be."

"That's all plain enough, except the angle; and I don't understand that," replied Pink. "I never saw any such marks upon myself; and I think you will have to look somewhere else for the fellow you want."

"Perhaps I shall; but I shall be very much surprised if I don't find those marks as I say they are."

The commander rose from the chair, and with trembling hand he unbuttoned the shirt-collar of the wait. Pulling the shirt down with one hand he held the candle with the other.

"There is the star on the right shoulder!" he exclaimed, when he found the mark for which he was looking.

"I never saw any such thing on my shoulder," added Pink. "But I suppose I am the fellow."

"I have had hardly a doubt of it since I first saw you," replied the commander.

"If I am the fellow you thought I was, who am I?"

"Don't be impatient, my boy; you shall know all in good time. Let me look at the other shoulder."

He pulled the shirt down on the other side; but the case seemed to be already made out, and his hand was stender.

"Here is the other mark!" exclaimed the captain. "I was sure I should find it!"

"I never saw that mark either," added Pink. "You could not have seen either of them without looking in a mirror," replied Captain Fairfield, taking a small hand-glass from the drawer of the table. "I will show you both of them, for it is as necessary that you should be satisfied in this matter as that I should be."

Conducting the wait to a large mirror at the end of the room he placed him back to it. Turning down the garment again, he held the hand-glass before the boy in such a position that it reflected the image on the large mirror.

"I see the star plain enough," said Pink. The commander turned down the shirt from the other shoulder, and Pink saw the F, though it appeared to be nearly upside down to him.

"You are satisfied, now, my lad," continued Captain Fairfield, leading his charge back to the seats by the table.

"So am I; you found what you said you would find," added Pink, wondering what all this meant.

"The shape and position of those marks are on record in America, where I can certainly find them when it becomes necessary for me to prove that you are the person I have found you to be."

"I suppose you intend to make it out that I am not Pinkerton Dykes," laughed Pink. "Captain Bodfield says I am The Pink of the Pacific, for that is what he always called me when we were in the whaler-ship, cruising in the Pacific."

"I shall surely prove in the end that you are not Pinkerton Dykes; but you may still be The Pink of the Pacific, for aught I care."

"It is hardly fair to take away my old name without giving me a new one," said Pink.

"You shall have the name you had years before you were The Pink of the Pacific in season to think of it when you go to bed."

"I don't believe I shall know myself with a new name," laughed Pink. "What shall it be?"

"Eliot Fairfield," replied the commander. "That's your name."

"It is my name; and you are my only son!" (To be continued—commenced in No. 481.)

It was a Dedham woman who threatened an offending representative of the male sex that she "would make his head so big that he could find a shirt in town large enough to cover it."

St. Louis comes to the front with a female native who sleeps on an average twenty hours out of the twenty-four, and cannot get along with less. Her motto, says the Albany Journal, ought to be handsome is what handsome does.

A New Colorado Wonder.

A MEMBER of a party of miners, named Green, disgusted with prospects at Pike's Peak, took, as his share of the camp outfit, an ox and a fore part of a cart, and out of the latter he made a sulky. With this he drove eastward and squatted on some land near Denver, which he cultivated. One day, as Green was driving his ox into Denver, some fellows on horseback attempted to pass him. The ox, moved by some apparent freak, quickened its steps until it went off in a swinging trot, leaving the horse behind. This was the first intimation Green had that his hot-tailed ox it was hot-tailed could trot. The idea then presented itself to him that if he could only accustom it to trotting a short distance on a certain piece of ground it could out-trot any horse in the neighborhood. There was a gambler named Randle in Denver at this time who owned a horse that could do his mile in 2:40. Randle was acquainted with Green, and would occasionally drop into his quarters and praise his horse.

A day or two after Green's discovery of his ox's powers Randle dropped in, and, as usual, began "talking horse." Green remarked that he had an ox that could beat Randle's horse for three hundred yards. Randle laughed at first, then got mad, and at last offered to bet ten to one that he could not be done. The bet was promptly taken, and they adjourned to a prepared place. The ox was backed up to a little hand-cart. When everything was ready, away they went. Sure enough, at the end of four hundred yards the ox came in ahead. On the spot Randle bought half the ox for five hundred dollars. The next day it was pitted against two horses, and the whole city turned out to see the remarkable phenomenon, a trotting ox. Again was it victorious, and amid the loudest excitement passed the mile six lengths ahead.

Every day thereafter the ox defeated a horse or two, and there soon became a popular demand for a share in the animal. Accordingly a company was formed with a joint stock of twenty shares, each share being for \$100. The stock went like hot-cakes, and soon sold above par. In a week, during which the ox had won several more races, the stock was quoted on the gambling tables, and passed for \$1,000 a share. At last a horse sired in San Francisco came along, and a trial of speed was made between him and the ox. On the appointed day it was estimated that there were ten thousand people present. The ox took the lead from the start; at the one hundred-yard pole he was a length and a half ahead of the one hundred and fifty it had become three lengths; at the two hundred and fifty the distance had widened into five lengths and the ox still gaining. But when within a dozen yards of the winning post, the ox became tired and made up his mind to stop. Accordingly he plumped his front feet and refused to budge. Moral lesson, profane abuse, physical ill-treatment, all failed to move him, and the horse quietly trotted past and took the race. From that minute the stock sank from \$1,000 a share down to \$100.

"Chill? I am not cold," laughed Pink. "Then hear me for a moment before I go any further. I take you to be a certain person."

"And so I am."

"Doubtless you are; but whether you are the one I mean is the question. If you are that person, I

A SUMMER IDYL.

BY HARRIET MABEL SPALDING.

Oh! sweetest days of all the passing year,
When Spring's fair hand is clasped in Summer's
own,
And gently wreathed the woodland ways appear,
Blended with song and roses freshly strewn.
Sweet is the coolness of this forest shade,
Where coral cups and hidden blossoms grow,
And tender flowers that grace the mossy glade,
Shower at our feet their petaled leaves of snow.
Winding between the purple hills of phlox,
The brooklet ripples on its silver way,
And lo! this pale arbutus 'neath the rocks,
Strives to recall the sweetness of the May.
A sunbeam having lost its shining track,
Threading its way the sunlit meadows o'er,
No hand can find the restless truant back,
Hid in the lily-cup beside the shore.
And now a sudden fragrance fills the air,
From half-blown buds that wake beneath our feet,
And gazing down their beauty quaint and rare,
Fills all the air with balm and incense sweet.
How fair is yonder meadow from afar!
One tuft of emerald light, with fold on fold
Of drifted buds. How sweet these violets are,
And crocus cups that brim with molten gold!
But now the brightness of the day is spent,
A soft breeze rising strangely cool and fair,
Kneels by the water's edge as though it beat
To kiss the lips of lilies sleeping there.
Only the Summer's hand could crown with flowers,
The budding branches dry and leafless long,
Strew sweetest garlands through the passing hours,
And make the woodland blossom into song.

A Great Mistake.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

GLADYS moved about the cheery, sunny room, arranging a vase of fresh May blossoms here, a challenge of hot-house ferns there; adjusting the lace curtains so that the western sunshine fell in on the India matting as through a veil—making a dainty, shimmering shadow of the apple-trees as the wind swayed their blossoming branches.
She was the most strangely beautiful woman Clyde Sardis had ever seen, and as he sat on the piazza outside the French windows, smoking a cigar scarcely less delicately fragrant than the sweet May day, and watching all her graceful movements, every one of which was a poem of itself, he was thinking how ever it happened that this glorious, enchanting creature had become an inmate of his grandfather's house; and wondering, even more surprised, that she was still free, with that ravishing beauty and fascination of hers.
He sat quietly in the comfortable bamboo chair, his handsome blue eyes growing warmer and eager as they followed the girl from place to place; and then when she sat down a moment at the open piano, and struck a half-dozen preliminary chords before she sang an aria from Traviata, he flung away his Reine Victoria, and went in through the window, to meet her luminous eyes as she stopped beside the instrument.
"Don't stop, Miss Saxehurst. You always stop as soon as I come in."
He dropped his handsome head a little nearer her; she laughed, and deliberately arose from the piano-stool.
"Do I really? You know Mrs. Sardis would be very much displeased to hear me sing—for anybody."
"And if my august sister-in-law should be guilty of such poor taste—what then?"
Gladys walked slowly toward the open window, where the declining sun shot its almost level rays full into her grand young face—a face so exquisite in its health and purity and rare beauty that even the searching radiance only added to its charm.
Sardis followed her, with intense reproach in his eyes, she lifted her own to his again, fairly dazzling him with their splendor of rare, rich, red-brown light.
"What then? She would gracefully give me my song, Mr. Sardis."
"Would she? Would she, really? Then sing to me, Miss Saxehurst, so I can take you myself."
Gladys laughed.
"How generous you are! And I never had such a delightful poem as 'The Sun and the Sun-lands.' Please do not forget I am not independent like—Miss Duncan. I am not that fortunate lady, remember."
"It is not at all likely that I shall forget you are not Miss Duncan," he said, eagerly. "You are something far more enchanting and beautiful than she—or any mortal woman."
He was looking straight in her face, watching the brief little flush that so seldom disturbed its pale fairness. Even now, she took no notice, apparently, of his intemperance.
"Well—Miss Duncan is the most favored woman I ever saw. She is rich, and her own mistress, and—"
She hesitated, in her pretty, graceful way.
"And what?" he asked, tenderly.
"That is enough, I am sure," she added, lightly.
"Is it enough, Gladys? Would riches and independence be all the goods of the gods you would ask?"
Somehow, their talk was growing very confidential; somehow, Clyde Sardis was realizing that this woman with the wine-brown eyes and drooping lashes and perfect hands, was creating a delicious, intoxicating havoc in his heart—this exquisite creature whose name was Gladys Saxehurst, and who was a hired servant in his grandfather's household—a paid attendant on his elegant, aristocratic sister-in-law's caprices—this lovely creature fit to be crowned and throned.
A quick little light flashed up in her eyes at his words, and then, her lids drooped swiftly, letting the long thick lashes lie on her cheeks like a shadow.
"It would not be enough, Gladys—I know that." With such a woman as you, love should be lord of all—sun and love, as the lady herself said.
A mischievous little face suddenly thrust itself in between the lace curtains.
"Please, uncle Clyde, mamma says will you come up to her room? Miss Duncan is there, and they want you."
Somehow, it made a break in the harmony. Somehow, after young Clyde had vanished again, and they two were left standing alone together, the thread of their conversation would not be taken up again, and it was Gladys who dissipated the rather awkward embarrassment of blank silence that fell upon them.
"Happy Miss Duncan!" she said, with a laughing little grimace that showed to perfection her small strong teeth, white as milk, and her exquisite curve of lips, and play of dimples in cheek and chin.
He shrugged his shoulders and went out; and Miss Saxehurst stood several minutes just where he had left her, a grave, thoughtful look coming into her eyes, as if she were, almost, a merciless expression gathering on her firmly-closed lips.
Then, she heard voices from some one descending the stairs, and then Isidore Duncan came down, followed by Mrs. Sardis and Clyde, and Gladys stepped away from where she was, that they might not see her, yet, where her eager, jealous eyes could watch Isidore Duncan's sweet, serious dignity of manner as Clyde Sardis walked beside her to the carriage that had just driven up to the mount, and was in waiting.
Five minutes later, before the carriage was lost to her gaze down the shady turnpike, old Mr. Sardis came in—a fine, handsome, courtly old gentleman of sixty, whose eyes lighted at sight of her, as he went across the room to where she stood.
"Well, my little girl! It is within one minute of the time when I said I would come to hear you tell me whether or not you would ac-

cept an old man's love and his name, and his home. Gladys! My darling, is it?"
For she had bewitched him, and—all his magnificent fortune, his princely home, the grand old name, the unassailable position as his wife and mistress of Sunnylands, were lying at her feet, to be taken or—rejected.

It was a wonderful streak of fortune, and Gladys had told herself so, over and over, in the twenty-four hours since Mr. Sardis had made his offer of marriage to her.
A wonderful piece of good luck, only—handsome Clyde had been nearer the truth than even Gladys had dared whisper to herself when he had said that for such as she love should be lord of all.

And—she never could, by any possibility, care for Clyde's grandfather, with all his courtly manliness and his riches and his position, because—she loved the grandson, the magnificent young fellow who was confidently expected to make love to and marry Isidore Duncan.

And Gladys felt a great wrenching pain at her heart that was a strange commingling of anger and disappointment and jealousy and misery, as she imagined Clyde and Miss Duncan off riding together in the sweet May sunning, Mr. Sardis gently interrupted her wandering thoughts.

"Well, Gladys! Remember I have been patient for twenty-four hours, and now I want to know how it is to be. Child—can you let me have you for my blessing, my treasure? Can you come to me and love me with all your fresh young heart? Because, unless you can, dear, I would rather you would frankly tell me what will be a sore distress to me."

To be mistress of Sunnylands. To own the very horses and carriage with which Isidore Duncan was riding that minute. To rise higher than the haughty woman who paid her sixty dollars a month for services rendered. To have diamonds and signed blank checks—should she! If only she could grasp that which she longed for Clyde Sardis; if only—

"We will be a very pleasant family circle," Mr. Sardis said; "you are aware that Clyde and Isidore will be married in a few months, and unless you come to be my little wife, I shall be very lonely, all to myself."

He smiled down in her suddenly swiftly-paling face—and for just one anguished little minute her breath seemed leaving her lungs, her heart seemed as if grasped in a cruel iron hand, and then—it was over, and she smiled in answer.

"It is because I cannot comprehend why you should want me, Mr. Sardis. If you really do—"

She had no need to finish her sentence, for Mr. Sardis drew her to him in a sudden, glad embrace.

"My own little love! You never, never shall regret this. If ever a woman experienced what it was to be an old man's darling, it shall be you, my Gladys!"

And, after she had escaped to her room, she walked up and down, up and down, with a white, drawn face that would have horrified both of the two men, with her small, fair hands tightly clenched, trying to beat down the agony of jealous longing for Clyde Sardis, with his handsome, eager eyes, and thrilling, passionate voice, and masterful way that had completely conquered her. Once that evening she went up to Mr. Sardis as he sat at an open window—in a pleading little way that was absolutely irresistible.

"Please don't mention our—our engagement, will you? It will be unpleasant for me—until I get a little used to it. Wait until I tell you, will you, please?"

He caressed the fingers that lay so lightly and coaxingly on his coat-sleeve.

"If you wish it so, Gladys, it is fortunate that you spoke so early, for I had fully intended to explain it all to Mrs. Sardis and Isidore Clyde, when they have finished their croquet. It is almost too dusky for them to see, now."

And, despite the prompt, gentlemanly acquiescence to her whim, Gladys also comprehended he would have preferred it otherwise.

"When they finished their croquet," Mr. Sardis had said; and when they finished it, Mrs. Sardis, and Miss Duncan, and Clyde, Jr., went into the brilliantly-lighted parlor where the old gentleman sat—and Clyde went straight to the dusky corner in the adjoining room—the music-room and Mrs. Sardis's morning parlor—where Gladys sat in a low, wide bamboo rocker, looking out into the starry darkness.

"I will not intrude, Miss Saxehurst," he said, lightly and half-inquiringly, as he went up to her, so near that he could see her ravishingly beautiful face that was even more glorified by the peculiar shadowy light; and then, catching up one of her hands that lay like a lily petal on the arm of the chair, the selfsame hand his courtly old grandfather had kissed scarcely an hour before, he drew her to him—up from the chair.

"Because," he said in a quick, passionate whisper that thrilled every nerve in her frame, "because I will come to you, anyhow. I have been dying of impatience to finish what I would have said this afternoon—Gladys!"

"Gladys! you must love me, you must love me! Will you? Darling, do you?"

Beyond the hopelessness of it, the cruelty of it, seeing that he was engaged to Isidore Duncan, the speechless ecstasy of it all surged like a wave of light and life over her, and—in one, just one little moment of weakness, or rather of desperate reckless longing and heart-aching for this handsome pleader who had no more right to speak than she had to listen—Gladys lifted up her face, which had that in it that made him stoop and kiss the quivering crimson lips, over and over, and hold her close to his breast. Only for one little, little second; and then, she broke away from him with an impatient despairing little cry.

"No! What good can come of this, even if we so love each other! Clyde! Clyde Sardis, was there ever such sarcasm of fate before? We love each other, and you are to marry Isidore Duncan, while I am engaged to—your grandfather!"

She fairly flung the last words at him, and he, looked as if she was speaking random words.

"What are you saying, my darling? I am to marry Miss Duncan! Perhaps people think so, but actually it is not so, as the lady herself testified. But I don't understand what you mean by saying you are engaged to marry my grandfather, Gladys."

An anguished little cry came from her lips, and she shrunk back into the chair again.

"He asked me, and he said you would marry her—and—and my heart almost broke, but I told him yes—Clyde! oh, for God's sake, don't look at me like that! I loved you so—I love you so!"

For a look of sudden disapproval and gravity was merging into one of scorn and contemptuous displeasure.

"It certainly was a strange way to manifest your love, Gladys. And see here. Somehow, it has—hurt. I couldn't think of being a rival of my grandfather's. Let us forget it all."

And he turned away from her, all his feelings in a state of revulsion for this fair creature who would have so cheerfully sold herself, but as old Mr. Sardis stepped through the door, and went up to her, kindly, resolutely, as one does who feels morally obliged to discipline an erring child.

"Nor could I dream of marrying the woman who is in love with my grandson. Gladys—see, it is rectified in time. As Clyde said, it will be best to forget it all."

And poor Gladys Saxehurst! Do you reserve for her censure or pity?

He had never been able to understand how it is that a woman who is apparently deaf when her husband asks her where that half-dollar is which he left in his pantaloons pocket before going to bed, can hear the wail of her two weeks' old baby down two flights of stairs and through three deal doors.

BETHESDA.

BY JOHN H. WHITSON.

Round Bethesda's rocky and moss-grown verge
There had gathered a feverish, restless throng.
That pressed where the fountain was wont to surge,
With a healing touch and a cheering song;
And apart from these, on the granite slope,
A beggar lay, ghastly in rags and woe,
Though his cheeks still flushed with the thrill of hope.

When the angel troubled the depths below,
Then a spasm would creep o'er his shriveled face,
And a quiver would thrill through his feeble frame,
Whenever another would seize the place
That of right to his weak some healing came;
But the Savior came to the healing shrine,
With a Savior's love in his yearning soul,
And there, with a pitying look divine,
Asked the crouching form: "Wilt thou be made whole?"

"Wilt thou be made whole?" with the strength of youth
The beggar leaped from his bed of stone;
"Wilt thou be made whole?" learn the blessed truth
That faith can cleanse thee, and faith alone!
For faith is the substance of things to be—
The heaven-born witness of things not yet seen;
And faith must transport us across that sea,
Where the waters roll in a death-cold sheen.

Oh, Father of faith! on thy glorious throne,
Thy head encircled with rainbow light,
Remove the burden of my sinning soul,
That is floating out from this orb of night!
Let conviction's shaft, like a fiery dart,
Write glowing words: "Wilt thou be made whole?"

Till faith shall dwell in each grateful heart,
And form a halo around each soul!

Divorced but Not Divided;
OR,
HIS GUIDING STAR.

BY "A PARSON'S DAUGHTER,"

AUTHOR OF "BETH POSE," "THE PRETTY FUR-TAN," ETC.

CHAPTER X.

A SELF-WILLED WOMAN.

"For if she will, she will; you may depend on't; And if she won't, she won't; so there's an end on't."

THE morning after Mrs. Jerrell's party found Griffith Gilruth dissatisfied with the world in general, and most of all with himself; which was entirely a new experience for that gentleman.

Letters which had brought only pleasurable anticipations to the others of his family were suggestive to him of annoying complications; and forced him to face the disagreeable fact that he had been very first of his line untrue to the legend of loyalty, to honor, upon which the Gilruth men so prided themselves. All of his name had been handsome men and brave; wild in many ways and loved of women and tender-minded; but not one but had held his plighted word, and none but had loved his love or his life. And Griffith had broken his.

Long ago, when he was a child of six, and an infant in her nurse's arms, Griffith Gilruth's troth had been plighted, by mutual wishes of his parents, to the tiny girl-child who represented in her own little person the rights to two of the finest estates in Germany and France. The one she inherited directly from her father who had died without even seeing his only child and the successor to his splendid lands and castle-homes; while through her mother—a cousin of Griffith's father—who was the only daughter of a large French family of noble blood and much wealth, the little Beatrix was heiress to considerable landed wealth in France; and after another of her uncles dying childless.

At twenty-one Griffith had been offered freedom from his betrothal, or personal ratification of it. He was traveling in Europe with his father, and just then seen Beatrix, a shy, blushing child in apron and short dress, brought from her school to shake hands with him, he carelessly and willingly gave his assent to the compact. He regarded marriage as a compact a man must form some time—a mere matter of the judgment after the manner of playing the lover to a score or so of women, and what more advantageous match could he make than this one with his little French and German second-cousin? But, after all, matrimony seemed so very dim and distant, that the girl soon ceased to be a reality to him. He went his way as carelessly and pleasantly as if there was no such person as Beatrix in all the world; yet not with a dream of marrying any other woman. He had never really considered where his intimacy with Elinor St. Martyn might lead him, until she stood looking into his eyes with her wistful, yearning ones that only time when he had surprised her in a mood like that of women who can love. Then he did what it was so natural for a man to do in the presence of a rarely beautiful woman whose heart many have desired to share and he only may—succumbed to flattered vanity and ambitious possessions.

And now, a few short hours after his outburst of passionate protest, the understanding to which he had led, he must needs be reminded of his broken honor, and foreign fiancée, by the announcement that Beatrix and Mrs. Leuthold would soon be in New York.

The tidings he met with the morning mail. To the judge they were most pleasing. He desired to see his only son settled in life, and hoped that Beatrix's visit would speedily result in the consummation of the cousins' long betrothal. Mrs. Gilruth, too, received the news gladly, and looked forward to introducing the ladies to New York society, and giving stylish entertainments in their honor. While Gertrude was elated with the anticipations of extra gayeties, and, perhaps, with the thought that she would be the first to see Beatrix, and that her presence as regarded her acquaintance with the handsome artist, Griffith, only, was annoyed at the thought of his betrothed's arrival.

"I am in a horrible fix, certainly," he reflected, glancing as he ran upon a business matter, "but I will not let this ruin my life. I would never do to return Mrs. St. Martyn her ring the day after she gave it to me. I have no choice but to let matters take their own way for awhile, keeping quiet my engagement to Beatrix, and, meanwhile, waiting for something to turn up. The amount of the business is I hate to break with Elinor! Of course I should get along with Beatrix well enough—Gertrude says she is a gentle, docile little thing—better perhaps than with the other, who has a temper and will of her own, too. Mrs. Martyn never tamed; but when it comes to love—Elinor has such a figure, such eyes, such a face, with all a woman's flesh-and-blood and fire about her, though she does seem such a marble statue! To think of putting her out of one's life, forever, to marry a nobby-nobby girl! And yet, I believe I was not wont to consider it essential that one should be *en rapport* with one's wife!" and he laughed at his inconsistency.

Perhaps it was to test the quality of the regard as old Mr. Sardis stopped at Mrs. St. Martyn's on his way down-town. He scarcely expected to see her, but purposed leaving his card with a dainty cluster of flowers. To his surprise she was breakfasting, and sent for him to join her in the pretty room where she sat sipping her coffee.

"Good boy! How nice of you to get her so quickly! Did you meet my messenger?" she asked, smiling and holding out her hand.

"No; had you sent for me? I merely stopped to leave these," and he brushed her brow with his lips as he stooped to lay the blossoms on her lap.

Elinor looked a trifle annoyed, and impatiently pushed her chair from the table.

"Thanks; it was kind of you to think of me. Yes, I was waiting to see you upon a business matter. I want you to act as my attorney in a transaction that requires immediate attention, and in which I am greatly interested. Will you?" with a shade of anxiety not characteristic of her.

Gilruth looked indifference that he was far from feeling, as he answered: "Is not Atterbury your lawyer? It would not do to interfere with another man's client."

"Yes, I am. Atterbury is capable of doing anything since the death of my father and Mr. St. Martyn. But he is prosaic and peculiar, and I do not care to have him take this matter in hand. To tell the truth, Griffiths, laughing, "I am sure you will think it a foolhardy affair altogether and consider it my duty to attempt to advise and coerce me."

"And you imagine I will do your will, blindly?" "I am willing to try you," she retorted, gayly.

"And what is this rash undertaking, in which you need a lawyer's assistance?" "Do you promise to devote yourself to it?" "I promise to devote myself to your interest, always, Elinor."

But when Mrs. St. Martyn had narrated the events of the previous evening, he exclaimed, impetuously: "And you expect me to encourage you to commit yourself further to this preposterous affair? I never heard of such madness! I would not have supposed you capable of doing anything so utterly foolish and rash! You must let the matter drop immediately, Elinor, and I will take steps to see that your name does not get abroad in connection with it!"

Mrs. St. Martyn tried to ward off her flowers while he spoke, only a deepening glow in her cheeks betraying the attention she was giving to his imperious words. But when he had finished, she glanced full in his face, with eyes haughtily dark and determined, and a chill, scornful smile.

"You might have spared yourself the waste of so much breath and energy. I did not ask for your opinion of my acts, but whether you were willing to make a professional engagement with me. It was quite easy to say no. There are dozens of lawyers and detectives who are capable of taking the affair in charge. I preferred you because you had been so kind as to intimate that you cared for me, and I supposed you would interest yourself to prosecute the matter thoroughly and privately. I will determine upon some one else, immediately."

Griffiths had walked to the mantle and stood leaning there and looking down at her. For a moment his eyes blazed and his lips were compressed, ominously. Yet there was something in the beauty's very anger that attracted him. He felt that he could never command her, yet he longed to conquer her.

"Do you mean," he said, presently, very calmly, "that you have fully made up your mind to continue your connection with this affair in direct opposition to any one's or every one's judgment?"

"I mean that I have given my promise to a dying woman; and will not break it, no matter how unpleasant or even terrible are the consequences. I am sorry to be disappointed, but I cannot make any other promise."

"Elinor, you certainly do not anticipate any personal unpleasantness?" he said, seriously, going and bending over her chair.

"Whatever I anticipate, I offered you the chance to learn it the worst and to do for me your best. I am sorry to be disappointed, but I cannot make any other promise."

"Queen Elinor, command me—if you love me." "You are unfair, Griffiths. I will not buy your services so."

"Nonsense, my friend! If you are determined to prosecute the matter, I am the person to assist you. But, seriously, Mrs. St. Martyn, do you not think it rash to commit yourself to the unraveling of this mystery?"

"I think, and know, and admit, that it was rash to engage in such a strange affair," she answered, rising. "Know it, and appreciate it, a hundred times beyond what you can, Griffiths. But I fully believe that it was a decree of fate by which I was controlled; and I shall go on with what I have undertaken. I cannot make my life less happy than it is by helping to set right a wrong done to an innocent individual. So all that we need discuss now is how to soonest sift this affair to the bottom. I have ordered my carriage and am going to Mrs. Lane's immediately. You will accompany me?"

"I will," assented Griffiths, committing himself to Mrs. St. Martyn's purpose without further protest, or a dream of the future he was thus to work out for himself.

"Thank you! I must ask you to excuse me, now, while I change my dress; I shall not keep you waiting over ten minutes."

As she spoke a card was brought her upon which was pencilled, underneath the name, a message, asking her for an immediate interview.

"Mr. Octavian L'efethen!" she exclaimed, dropping the card upon the table. "I shall have to see him! It must be a matter of importance, and he is coming to pay a call—something about the girl who mended my lace, perhaps. Is it not enough that I forgive her failure to get them to me in time for the party?" she concluded, hastening to her visitor and not dreaming that she left Gilruth to unpleasant speculations aroused by the name she had read.

Her interview with the elderly Frenchman was brief, but the favor he had come to ask seemed to Mrs. St. Martyn, at first, perfectly astounding; and she was not quite sure when she had promised it, and he had thanked her so elaborately and made an appointment to receive her at his own home the next day, that she had not assumed a responsibility that would suggest to society that she had quite taken leave of her senses. But Elinor was not afraid to defy criticism, and the whole affair was so novel, and—

"Well," she concluded, mentally, as she hastened to prepare for her drive, "I certainly have enough new interests upon my hands now. Try it, never rains but it pours. And Mrs. Martyn, child, I nearly stumbled over you. Why, how pale you look! You do not romp enough. We will ask mamma to get you ready for a ride with me, if you are not afraid to sit in the carriage with me, and I'll be on the box with James, while I make a call on my friends."

"Oh, not one bit!" cried Myra, in happy excitement. And when Mrs. St. Martyn joined her young attorney, she had the little girl with her, and Griffith put them in the carriage, asking as he took his own place:

"Well, Elinor, did my misanthropic relative prove an agreeable caller?" "He proved a startling one. He came to ask me to mix myself up with another romance."

"Oh, you'll say more than that when I tell you it!" she laughed. "He has adopted a daughter, or ward, or protégée, or whatever you choose to call her, and desires me to act as chaperone to the girl."

"You will never do it!" cried Griffiths, in disgust. "On the contrary, I shall! It will be so novel, you see. Wonders never cease. Who knows what startling results may be brought about through the social *début* of this adopted cousin of yours?"

CHAPTER XI.

STRAW.

"Take a straw and throw it up into the air, you may see by that which way the wind is."

—JOHN SELDEN.

MRS. ST. MARTYN'S carriage stood before the dingy boarding-house where Christabel Letronne lay dead, and a little white, grave, childish face looked out at its open window, when a man came down the walk—a tall man with a handsome face somewhat hidden by a large but not unbecoming slouch hat. Reaching the stone steps he turned his attention to the carriage. The coachman had dismounted and stood in the sun at the head of his horses, and the stranger crossed the walk and pleasantly addressed the child:

"Whose carriage is this?" "Mrs. St. Martyn's," answered Myra, gravely.

"Ah! And she has gone inside?" indicating the house. "Yes, sir; she and Mr. Gilruth."

"Gilruth! Judge Gilruth?" "I don't know; Mrs. St. Martyn calls him Griffiths."

An unpleasant smile flickered across the man's lips. Then he asked, insinuatingly: "And what is your name, little girl?" "Myra Taylor, sir."

The questioner started, visibly; and gazed so intently into Myra's face that the child shrank back, timidly.

"Myra Taylor! Then you are not Mrs. St. Martyn's little girl?" he resumed, persuasively. "How comes she to take you riding?" "Mamma and I live with Mrs. St. Martyn," said Myra, wishing he would go away.

"What does 'mamma' do?" "She is Mrs. St. Martyn's maid."

"Oh!" Apparently satisfied with his investigations the questioner turned toward the house and at that moment a young woman came out of the basement door and spoke a few hurried words to him. It was scarcely a minute before she disappeared again, and he, too, had walked away.

In the meantime Elinor and Griffiths were in the room where lay the dead stranger. According to Mrs. St. Martyn's command the body had already been arrayed in a delicate white shroud and placed in a plain rosewood coffin, and now that the lines of her face, which at death had been distorted by excitement and anguish, had settled into repose, Christabel Letronne's was seen to be a beautiful countenance, and one that bore the unmistakable traces of those ravages made by a fiery spirit and passionate heart which often add more fascination to a woman's looks than any beauty of color or contour. Her fair profuse hair waved back from a marble-arched brow, and her lashes were singularly long and silken. The mouth, too, with its waxen lips, spoke even yet of its once curving loveliness.

To Griffiths the face of the dead woman was but briefly interesting, and only in a professional way; but for Mrs. St. Martyn it held an inexhaustible fascination. She scanned its every lineament long and earnestly, adjusted a lock of the bright hair with tender grace over the white forehead, and lingered at the side of the coffin, her head bowed, and her eyes full of tears.

Griffiths, thoughtful and sad, while Griffiths questioned and cross-questioned Mrs. Lane, and that the boarding-house mistress could tell concerning her lodger was soon learned. Mrs. Letronne was from New Orleans. She was ladylike and paid in advance. She went out a great deal, and had a daily paper brought her when she was sick, to read the personals. One day when she was going out she asked if Mrs. Lane had a safe. The landlady said that she had no safe, but a strong chest that she kept locked in a closet. Mrs. Letronne then requested to have a package put in there, and said that it contained some important papers. The parcel was square and thick, tied with ribbon, and sealed with wax stamped with the ring that Mrs. Letronne wore. Mrs. Lane knew that the package was safe to be deposited in the boarder's death, for she had occasion to get some money from her chest and saw it there; but she could not say at what time after that the chest and chest had been opened. Mrs. Letronne had been more or less a subject of speculation in the family, and no doubt among the boarders, but she had made no acquaintances, and no communications concerning herself or her business; and Mrs. Lane and her eldest daughter, Dora, had been the only persons who knew of the package in the chest.

Miss Lane's statement was entirely corroborative of her mother's. She affirmed that neither of them had any idea that the package contained anything but papers, and that she had mentioned its existence to no one, and no theories to advance except that her mother had, somehow, been made the victim of an adventure. Miss Dora was a rather stylish girl and self-possessed; answering the questions put by Griffiths with a cool even voice, and in a different manner, her cool eyes meeting his with no sign of unusual embarrassment or interest.

"Elinor, can you take me directly to a detective agency? I shall put the matter into the best hands possible, and there is no time to be lost," announced Griffiths, as he and Mrs. St. Martyn took their departure, his professional enthusiasm thoroughly aroused.

"Certainly; give your order to James," answered Mrs. St. Martyn, entering the carriage. "Well, Myra, have you been long in the house?" "Not very. I was a little frightened once."

"Why, dear?" "A man stopped and spoke to me and asked me about the carriage, and you, mamma, and me."

"Where was James that he did not stop? I must speak to him to keep better watch over you, and not let you be interviewed against your wishes," said Mrs. St. Martyn, pleasantly. "Then, turning to Griffiths, "Well, Griffiths, what are you thinking?"

"That at present this seems a mysterious case; but I have my doubts as to whether we shall not discover that landlady at the bottom of the mystery."

"No, Griffiths. She is certainly honest. It is the daughter who knew more than she told, if any one. I do not like that girl."

"Is that a woman's intuition, purely?" questioned Griffiths, teasingly.

"Yes, a woman's intuition, purely." "They are said to be so infallible, I shall feel constrained to keep a look-out upon Miss Dora Lane. Now I must soon bid you good-morning. I will attend to everything concerning this affair, personally, and nothing shall be left undone that can be done to get at the bottom of the matter; dismiss it entirely from your mind, Elinor. You need rest. You have been, and are, more worried than you care to acknowledge. Try to forget it. I will see you this evening, as usual, at eight o'clock."

"Try to forget it!" repeated Mrs. St. Martyn, leaning her head against the satin upholstery of her carriage, and drawing her hand wearily across her eyes, when Griffiths was gone. "If I try to forget it, I shall never be able to put that woman's dead face out of my sight until I have fulfilled the promise I gave her—to find Jules Letronne, to undo the wrong she had done him! What wrong? What wrong had he suffered at her hands? What had he—this Jules Letronne—to forgive her—this Christabel Letronne? Where were they to each other? What is he?—Jules Letronne—that was what he was called? Where is he? Where are the papers, the jewels, the proofs? Proofs of what? I could not go into eternity without undoing a terrible wrong I once committed. I have searched, and searched, for the person I sinned against. Ask him to forgive—forgive me."

Every word that Mrs. Letronne had uttered was engraved as distinctly upon Elinor's brain as was the woman's haunting dead face, and could not be lightly forgotten. They crowded into her mind, and echoed in the air about her, until she found herself in the same exhausted, nervous mood that had assailed her for a time at the previous evening. But the little Myra's presence was in some measure a relief to her. She took the child from one shop to another, to show her pretty flowers and toys and pictures, until she found forgetfulness and pleasure in the little one's delight.

It was quite a lunch-time when Mrs. St. Martyn reached home with her happy charge, and dismissing Myra with a kiss, hurriedly dressed for that meal. At the table she found Mrs. Allison—an elderly lady and distant relative who had acted as companion to the beautiful young widow ever since the death of Mr. St. Martyn.

in Mrs. St. Martyn, and all Mrs. St. Martyn's doings, and all Mrs. St. Martyn's friends, but was that she stood a trifle in awe of the proud, brilliant, society queen; certainly there was no great intimacy between the two, and the elder lady might not have appreciated how much unexpressed affection Elinor cherished for her. "I am going to increase my family," Mrs. Allison said, Elinor, brightly, when she had poured a cup of fragrant tea for her companion.

The person addressed looked as startled, and colored as vividly, as if Mrs. St. Martyn had announced some matrimonial scheme in her behalf.

"My dear," she said in a tone partly exclamatory, partly questioning, that she often used when surprised.

"Yes, actually," went on Elinor, lightly, recounting Sydney's story and Mr. Trefethen's plans concerning her.

"I am afraid it will be a source of trouble to you," remarked Mrs. Allison with strange precision. "I do not think this raising young persons above their station is to be approved."

"Now, I, ordinarily, but if there is any unpleasant responsibility in this case it will fall on Mr. Trefethen, and not on me. Really, I cannot see how the young lady can be a source of trouble to me, aside from superintending her manners and toilettes."

"Well, I hope she will not be, dear. I hope not."

"Mrs. St. Martyn! Mrs. St. Martyn!"

The door was thrown open, and Myra ran in, pale and trembling.

"Mamma is sick! won't you come?"

Elinor hastened up-stairs with the child.

"Where is mamma?" she asked.

"In her room."

"And what made her sick?"

"I don't know. I was telling her about my ride, and the man who spoke to me, and she fell over."

Mrs. St. Martyn found the dark-robed figure of her maid lying senseless upon the floor. But a spray of cologne and application of salts speedily restored her to consciousness.

"Myra! Myra! Where is she?" she asked in seeming fright, as she opened her eyes.

"Here," said her mistress, soothingly, pushing the child into the mother's arms.

Taylor clasped the little one close to her heart, and kissed her, again and again.

"What is the matter, Taylor?" questioned Mrs. St. Martyn, recalling the young woman fully to herself.

"Only a passing faintness, ma'am. Did Myra call you?"

"It was nothing," she said, hurriedly.

"Certainly you look ill. I shall not want you before evening—the dress can go; I will wear something else—and you must lie down for a few hours," said Mrs. St. Martyn, generously but impatiently. "I will send Myra to Mrs. Allison awhile."

"Oh, no! no! Myra will be still. Let her stay with me!"

Mrs. St. Martyn looked surprised.

"You are nervous," she said, gravely.

"What has happened?"

"Nothing, ma'am," said Taylor, motioning Myra to go, and striving to appear calm.

Elinor led the little girl out of the room, while the miserable mother buried her face in her pillows, and wept.

"Why did I not tell her the truth? Perhaps she would have pitied rather than blamed me. There is nothing for me to do now but go away."

CHAPTER XII.

FORTUNE—AND ITS CONDITIONS.

Thus her blind sister, fickle fortune, reigns, And undisciplined scatters crowns and chains. —POPE.

"GUARDY! GUARDY!"

An impetuous rap, then the swift flinging open of the door by the man within, and the almost breathless girl was caught in his strong arms, and her excited cry stifled against his broad shoulder.

"Where in the name of Heaven have you been, child?" he asked, after a minute, holding her from him and regarding her great dilated eyes and hot color, while his own face lost something of its pallor. "I only found a few minutes ago that you had been away all night; and I think I have grown a year older since, Helene, you met with no harm?"

"You shall judge, Guardy," she said, brightly, drawing him to his arm-chair, the one luxury his room contained. And kneeling with girlish grace before him, she narrated minutely her mishap of the previous afternoon and advent into the Trefethen mansion.

"And you are sure you were not badly hurt? That you are quite well enough to come away? I had the doctor's permission to come. But, Guardy, I am to go back!"

"Back? Back where, Helene?"

"To Mr. Trefethen! Don't you look so puzzled, Guardy, and so grave, while I am so happy? You will not bid me reject this good fortune, surely?"

Her companion smiled, and drew his hand caressingly across the girl's flushed, beautiful cheeks.

"Dear child, I have no authority to interfere with your life in any way," he answered, gravely. "And I certainly would not for an instant counsel you against the acceptance of any real good. A thousand times, Helene, I have wished that it was in my power to make existence more bright and beautiful for you, and he looked down with tender eyes into the girl's face. "But you have not told me what you mean by your 'good fortune.'"

"Mr. Trefethen has offered to take me as his ward, and care for me as he would for his own daughter, for a year, as a birthday present! There! what do you think of that?"

Her companion regarded her in amazement; and, for a minute, in silence. He loved the girl so well that it hurt him to see her so happy, so high spirits, and so full of life, and yet he could not but conjecture that the acceptance of such a strange offer would result in more bitter misery to her than any she had yet known. He understood her childish nature, her passionate longings for a home and life above her station, and he felt that for her to spend one year in idleness and luxury, only to be thrust back into sternest poverty and utter friendlessness, would be like thrusting her from Paradise into hell!

"Guardy, you are not glad?" she said, wistfully. "You are not glad! Tell me why?"

She leaned her pretty dimpled chin upon her hand and watched him, with heart that beat too sweetly for her to quite conceal her anxiety and excitement.

"Little girl, what will you do when that year is up? Could you come back here, contentedly?"

Her face brightened.

"Mr. Trefethen said I was not to worry about that, Guardy. And he wishes to see you, this evening, immediately after his dinner-hour. He said that by that time he should arrange plans concerning my future that he would confide in."

"And you are to live in his home?"

"Really, I don't know, he is so very odd. But I think not. I wished to be allowed some duties, but he only laughed and said I need not think he intended to prison so bright a bird in that old cage."

"I have heard of this Mr. Trefethen—that he is enormously rich, and quite eccentric, so perhaps this is not a marvelous whim of his, though it does seem so to me," said the gentleman, speculatively. "Can you explain it, Helene?"

"Not fully; but I think he imagined that I looked like some one he knew," answered the girl, ingeniously. "He said I had her name, and that it was a wicked name, and I must change it. Sydney Trefethen he called me—and said it suited me well. Oh, he is very funny! So gallant—like a young man ought to be—one minute, and so quick and cross the next! But you will go and see him?"

"Certainly, Helene. At what hour?"

"Between seven and eight. And now I must run away—I have so much to do—much! Some one must collect my furniture to dispose of, and my things to pack—and all to-day, for Mr. Trefethen is to send for me in the morning."

"Then you are really going away from this poor little place where you have worked and been at home so long? Do you care at all, little girl?"

There was a touch of sadness in the speaker's voice that sent the tears in a hot rush to Helene's sunny blue eyes.

"Care? Of course I care—to leave you! How kind you have been!—makes me sick to think how little I knew until you taught me. Oh, Guardy! Guardy! I shall love you just as much, and best of all, wherever I am, and all my life!" and she laid her wet face upon his kindly-clasping hands.

And yet, for all the girl's passionate outburst of grief she knew only when they were quite separated all that this man was to her.

"That is very kind of you to say," smiling tenderly; "but time brings many changes. I only pray that it may bring me a friend for, at that in me you yet held a true friend, though all others fail you. I am glad that a bright future is opening to you, for the time has come when I, too, must desert this place where I have hoped and toiled."

"I have been fearing that ever since you commenced getting rich and famous."

"How delighted I should be, if those flattering words were true, Helene! But I do hope the foundations of competency and lasting success are laid."

"I know they are!" she said, gayly. "Why, Mr. Trefethen recognized your name the moment I mentioned it. I assure you it was quite an open sesame for me to his faith! And now, Guardy, mind! you must make him promise, before he goes, to let me remain in some way, what he proposes to do for me! Don't forget that!" looking back through the half-closed door with an earnest face.

And the man she left alone in his meagerly-furnished lodging, smilingly thought that the lonely old millionaire must be indeed very bad if he could not be repaid for all he might do for Helene's welfare by an occasional grateful glance from those brave, laughter-filled eyes. Then he wondered whether it was possible that Mr. Trefethen had discovered in the girl's pretty face a clew to a percentage at present unsuspected, and which gave her some legal or moral claim upon him. Could her good fortune be thus accounted for, or had the fickle goddess of the horn of plenty chosen the friendless orphan as a favorite upon which to lavish strangely bright gifts, in mere whimsicalness? And thus the man fell to reviewing his own life—his dreary, despondent, sorrowful life, with its score of wasted years, that had led him no success until now that he looked upon his manhood's rapidly-advancing prime, and even to the distant future, a cloud of promised happiness. Was he ever to conquer the malignity with which Clotho seemed determined to spin the thread of his life and win from her at last a golden guard?

"Bah!" he said, disdainfully, rousing himself from his dreamings. "Is this the way to win the goal for which I strive and run? I have no minutes to waste, in idleness. Faster, faster, every day, speeds the time in which a fortune and a name must be mine!"

And he set himself resolutely at work, while the beautiful waif for whose sake he had been wont to daily rob himself of some of the precious hours he would otherwise have devoted to wrestling with his mad ambition, his Herculean purposes, had reached golden fortune just through the magic of her face.

But that night, for her sake, he sent in his card, Mr. Lucien Gillette, to Helene's new guardian, and was soon talking of her with Mr. Trefethen.

"She is pretty! Lovely! She pleases me!" said the old Frenchman, looking at the picture of his interest in Helene. "But we will call her Sydney, now, if you please, Monsieur Gillette. She looks upon you as her guardian, I believe?"

"She has dubbed me that," replied the artist, smiling, "because she has studied with me, and had no other friend. I have no claim upon her, nor she upon me."

"It is as she says then—she is a charity child?"

"I think her history is entirely true. She is a remarkable girl. With all the work she does to earn a scanty living she has contrived to read and study much. I consider her intellectual powers considerably above the average."

"Yes, remarkably. Bravel sparkling! Coquette," assented the older man. Then he looked up, his eyes twinkling. "This is what I mean to do for her—give her a year in which to get married!"

Lucien started.

"Surely, you will not tell her that!" he exclaimed, almost sternly. "That child!"

The Frenchman shrugged his shoulders.

"She's no child! One month in society will make her a woman—not to be outwitted by any belle. French girls marry young, and she can do nothing better, the pretty thing, alone in this great city."

"You don't mean, sir, that you propose to introduce that girl, who has never seen other life than in an asylum, a kitchen, and a garret, directly to the fashionable world? I never heard of such a thing!"

The artist's surprised, dissenting face seemed only to please Mr. Trefethen.

"That is what I have been told before, to-day! But I shall do it! She shall take society by storm with her frank, sparkling ways! No artificial training shall spoil her!"

"And yet, you would spoil the purity of her soul, by setting her the degrading task of seeking a husband to stand between her and return to poverty?"

"Not so! Not so!" cried the old man, testily.

"The husband shall seek her! I shall tell her nothing, except that she is to be happy."

"And if the husband does not seek her? There are few demands for penniless brides."

"We shall not be penniless. I have given her my name, and the day she marries will settle a fine fortune upon her. But if, at the end of the year, she has no betrothed, and she wishes it, I will make her heiress to everything that I possess, except my estates abroad, and she shall be married!"

"You mean that a promise to that effect must be the condition upon which you will make her your heiress?"

"Yes! And I take her, now, upon these conditions—she not to know of them until I choose to tell them to her! What shall you say to her?"

"Nothing. My lips shall be sealed. I hope the girl will be happy. It is all I can do. I dare not take the responsibility of standing between her and the chances you offer her."

"Then you have never intended marrying her yourself?" said the Frenchman, suddenly.

"Gillette's voice was fairly tremulous. It was such a new, strange, startling suggestion. "Oh, no! No!"

"Well, she will be in good hands. There is no better woman in town to take her into society than Mrs. St. Martyn."

"Mrs. St. Martyn?"

"Ah! I see you know her!" The old gentleman's keen eyes had not lost the indescribable look of mingled pleasure and repulsion with which his visitor had repeated that name.

"And do you know Gilruth—young Gilruth?" he added, instantly after, with voice hard and sharp and cutting as some slender deadly instrument.

"Slightly, yes, both of them."

"They say he will marry her. Do you think so?"

"I have no idea," returned the artist with well-bred indifference. "Have you anything more to say to me in regard to Miss Trefethen?"

"Only that I shall send her to Mrs. St. Martyn's, immediately. You will go there some time to see her?"

"That depends quite upon Mrs. St. Martyn."

"Not to mention," he depends upon Made-moiselle Trefethen; and she will never forget you!"

"I should be sorry to think so. And, now,

for her sake, I must ask how she can repay you for your favor?"

"By being a success!" snapped Mr. Trefethen. "She must not disappoint me! She must be a success!"

So Mr. Gillette took his departure—marveling how strangely destiny was weaving the web of many lives through the hands of this queer old man who had gathered up the threads and offered fortune upon such strange conditions to the founding; and questioning:

"Will she be a success?"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 486.)

Iron Wrist,

The Swordmaster of Copenhagen.

A TALE OF COURT AND CAMP.

BY COL. THOMAS HOYER MONSTERY, CHAMPION-AT-ARMS OF NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FIRST STAGE.

It was the same post-house at which the Dane had been overtaken the evening before that he now knocked, and he took care to make the summons loud enough.

The same stupid postmaster came to the door, but as soon as he saw the gleaming uniform of the swordmaster, he began to make obeisance. "Mighty general, imperial highness, the horses are all ready. How many does your lordship require?"

"How many have you got?" demanded Olaf, for an idea had come into his head.

"Two complete sets, general—six horses."

"Out with them all—on the emperor's service," cried Olaf, and away went the postmaster as if he had been running a race.

Out came the horses, all neatly harnessed for a trot or a gallop, and the postmaster looked round for the vehicle.

"Take the harness off, Nicolai, and change our saddles," commanded the Dane; and Nicolai, a stalwart Cossack, trained to implicit obedience, followed the order in silence.

The postmaster started in silence, but did not dare say a word, for Olaf stood close to him with a heavy whip in his hand.

No sooner were the saddles shifted than the swordmaster mounted his fresh horse and asked: "How many more horses, and where are they?"

"Only four, your excellency, and they are out in the fields."

Then drive these on, Nicolai. We shall want the coppers, and the lanterns were swinging away in the wildest fashion.

Olaf looked at it a moment and then far ahead. He saw another set of lanterns, up in the air, a few miles further on, and, like the others, these lights were swinging about.

Then it flashed on his mind in a moment that he was being signalled about.

He contrasted the treatment he had received at the post-house with what the emperor's orders led him to expect, and his acute mind at once jumped to the right conclusion. The emperor, he thought, had been waiting for him, and he suddenly remembered that he had heard of, although he had never seen, a telegraph.

And if the delay at the post-house arose from the message signalled ahead, the tower in front of him was probably already warned of his coming. What was to be done?

CHAPTER XVII.

THE TELEGRAPH.

MORE than a hundred miles further on the road to Warsaw, that same night, the telegraph contained the Princess Natalie Dembinski's order to her father to join her lover, was halted before another post-house.

About ten miles beyond the place where Iron Wrist was riding on, the household and baggage of Grand Duke Constantine had gone into camp.

At least three hundred miles ahead, thanks to rapid posting, the grand duke himself, with the immediate officers of his personal suite, were rolling along on the road to Warsaw, having left the saddle for the tarantass as soon as fatigue compelled them to sleep. Constantine was a man who lost no time on the road.

Just as Olaf started on his gallop from the Nicoloff post-house, Tekli Aga, pale and weary, his hand up to his forehead, was in a sling, and otherwise in a general condition of dilapidation, rode slowly toward the camp of the duke's baggage, coming from the direction of Warsaw.

If Olaf could have seen what was going on at these same places at the same time, he would have been puzzled to account for it. He knew Tekli Aga must have been in a fight and got the worst of it, but he did not know that the princess had gone a hundred miles further under the sole guidance of her brother, without an escort.

As it was, at the moment when he galloped off, another station-master, a great Hercules of a Cossack, was just informing Prince Ivan Dembinski that he "could not have any horses that night, perhaps not the next day. Who knows? God is great, and the czar is far off."

So that the irate young prince, not being big enough to thrash the postmaster himself, was obliged to put up with the delay for the night at least, little suspecting that the swaying arms of the semaphore had already conveyed the important message to the czar's far off.

The mist had prevented the transmission of intelligence in the early part of the night, but as soon as the fog lifted, the signals flashed along with the utmost rapidity, and the short half-hour in which Olaf had changed saddles for his last ride had given time to his relentless foe, the secret police, to get ahead of him.

Much of this he suspected, but he trusted to his luck to carry him through, and dashed along at full speed.

An hour's sharp riding brought him in full view of the red glare of camp-fires, which told where the train had gone into camp for the night, and he was sorely tempted to turn aside and ask after the fugitives.

However, he felt that to do so would be imprudent, as well as disobedient to the czar's orders.

About the last he did not much care, for he was so much infatuated with his early patron, the Grand Duke Constantine, whom he looked on as the very mirror of chivalry, that he was willing to abandon the emperor any moment to please the grand duke; but he reflected that to ask in the camp would be to expose Constantine's secret to Drankovitch, who was there, and he had a sort of instinct that the aide-de-camp was not to be trusted.

Therefore he galloped on, full speed, past the cheerful glow of the camp-fires, which never looked so ruddy and pleasant as they did now to his tired eyes, and pretty soon saw ahead of him, a solitary horseman coming slowly down the road.

Increasing his pace, he rode to meet him and soon recognized the Circassian Chief, Tekli Aga, evidently in bad plight.

For the first time in his journey Olaf pulled up to halt in earnest and eagerly inquired: "Well, what has it? Is she safe yet?"

"The lady is safe at Lutzen by this," returned the Circassian quietly. "The Cossacks got at me, but my horse was too good and led them a chase. I killed three, but a lance struck me on the head, and one of the cowards fired at me and made a hole in my arm, here. You'll find them all along the road, with horses used up. Where go you?"

"On, to help her," replied Olaf briefly, and gathering up his reins.

"God keep you. Take care of the Cossacks," was the answer, and then Olaf galloped off under the road on the way to Lutzen at the same wild pace at which he had come. He was pretty tired already, for riding sixty miles at a fast gallop, no matter how many horses a man uses, is hard work; but Olaf Iron Wrist was also worthy to be called Iron Heart in his constitution and pluck, so he galloped on the

same as ever, changing horses as he went, till he came to the next post-house, some twenty miles further.

He did not pause here, for he knew that the horses he had would last him to the next station, and he judged that the loss of time would be more than equivalent to the gain of horses, if he stopped.

The next post-house was only ten miles off, and he changed horses twice on the last stage, riding up to the door with Nicolai on a pair comparatively fresh.

As he came up to the door, three horsemen were there, whose long lances showed that they were Cossacks.

In a moment he realized that these must be the men who had set on Tekli Aga.

As he thought of this, he also remembered that his pistols were unloaded, for he had fired them off at the last post-house and had not reloaded them.

He reflected, however, that his position was now very different from what it had been the night before. He was no longer nominally a dependent of the grand duke, but swordmaster-general to the czar, a title implying a good deal of power.

He rode up to the door and found it wide open, the postmaster conversing with the Cossacks.

As he approached they all looked up, and he took the initiative.

"What are you men doing here?" he inquired, in the angry tones of an officer of rank with a sharp temper. "What are you doing away from your barracks, and where is your officer?"

The Cossacks seemed to be amazed, for they saw before them an officer of authority in a rich uniform, and followed by one of their own comrades, a "red Cossack" of the Guard.

"Honorable father," began one, "we have lost our officer at the hands of a devil of a Circassian, and—"

"Then what are you doing here?" he interrupted, as roughly as possible.

"We were trying to get a feed of grain for our horses, little father."

"Then get out of here. *Poshi! von! Poshi! von!*" And Olaf began to swing his whip to drive them away. Nicolai unconsciously aided the deception by crying:

"Go, you pigs, you long-eared donkeys! Have you no sense? In a sense! He is talking the general, with dispatches from the czar himself. Away!"

So the Cossacks shrunk back humbly enough. They were not in the secret police, and knew not of the semaphore message.

"Now, station-master, send Olaf, roughly, out with all your horses in a hurry. A man who rides with dispatches rides fast. Out with them, all quickly, or I will know the reason why."

But the station-master had been warned, and in a moment began to make excuses—said the utmost respect it is true—but still to make excuses.

"Where are the horses?" demanded Olaf, sternly, cutting him short.

"We have none, general; they are all out in the fields."

"Liar. The law obliges you to keep one set always harnessed. Thrash him out, Nicolai."

Nothing loth, Nicolai began to flog the station-keeper, who only danced and howled, while he protested that he was telling the truth.

"Take us to the stables, then."

"Certainly. Your excellency shall see for yourself."

And the man led the way to the stable. Sure enough, it was empty.

"Where are the horses?" asked the swordmaster, and as he spoke he also began to flog the poor Russian, who between Nicolai and Olaf danced and howled in good earnest.

"Where are the horses? Quick!"

Seeing that it was no use in preparing, for the swordmaster and his orderly were beating him so severely that he feared for his life, the poor postmaster yelled out:

"Mercy, general! Oh, your excellency, your highness, I will tell. They are out on the plain, but I can call them in with the horn of von. I had to turn them out. Count Strogonoff has sent orders."

"That will do, Nicolai," interrupted Olaf, as he desisted. "Call in your horses quick. So it was Strogonoff's order, was it? What is he doing?"

He said this in a musing tone while the now contrite station-master was getting the horn.

Then the horn blew and the tramping of hoofs was heard. Up came at least twenty young horses, running at full speed to get their oats.

Olaf laughed for joy to see them.

"Now, Count Strogonoff," he thought, "stop me if you can."

(To be continued—commenced in No. 484.)

The Way He Saved Himself.

BY J. D. BURTON.

It is not often that a man who has steeped himself in crime until he has undergone the degradation of State's prison punishment ever truly reforms, but Dana Shields had yielded to a good impulse, and gone to work to redeem himself with such success that in four years' time he stood as well with the world as if that dark episode of his wild young life had never marred it. So he told himself at least.

But, after he got to thinking of Bertha Morris, he awoke next, and then from vivid dreams of the old story having followed him with the cold sweat starting on his forehead, but had any one been taking particular note of his actions, it would have been seen that his real anxiety did not begin until two rough-looking men made their appearance in the neighborhood.

Dana had charge of a construction-train on a new line of railway, with thirty men working under him. He stood one morning on the embankment of a cutting, directing the loading of the flat-cars beneath, when one of these strangers came up and asked him to go with them.

"Well, boss, me and Jake have made up our minds to follow your lead. We're a-going to work, and want you to put us onto your gang."

"I thought I had told you unmistakably enough that I could have nothing to do with you two," said Dana, with a frown, "with eyes as clear as mine."

"Yes, I understand all that," returned the man, smiling. "You won't go in with us in that plan we talked of, but this is another thing. If we can't raise a stake one way we must another; so just you give us the job we're asking for, and be glad if we let you off that easy. I ain't sure as we will."

to reach their own homes. A touch on the shoulder brought him about to face the master of the line.

"I hope you are fresh yet, Shields. Here are a couple of flats I want you to take on to Chestertown to-night. They are ready here on the side track."

Not quite ready it would appear, for two or three heavy kegs were trundled past them where they stood, and loaded on under the road-master's supervision. The engineer received his instructions, and proceeded to hook on the caboose and engine. Dana sprung up and waved his lantern from the doorway of the former, and it was not until the train was under headway that he discovered two of the laborers still in the compartment.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded, with sudden foreboding as he recognized them.

"Hold easy, Shields. Keep a civil tongue if you know what's good for yourself. You're no better man than we are, and we don't propose to see you a-rolling in luck and us at the foot of the heap. We're going to make a stroke for ourselves, and you've got to help us whether you like it or not. What's in them kegs you've got aboard?"

"Spikes, I daresay, but I don't know." "Well, I do. It's specie for the month's pay on the line, and the vice-president is on the look-out for it at Chestertown, but it'll never get there. You'll drop us and it a dozen miles this side."

"Will I, though?"

The two dark, sinister faces turned upon him were answered with a look of intense scorn, and a revolver simultaneously in the hands of each.

"We won't stand no fooling, Jake and me. You're in the scrape, and may as well make the best of it. We depend on you to manage the engineer, and give us time for a start before you get into Chestertown—an hour's much as we ask. If we're took, your friends and the company shall know it's a State's prison bird they've been making so much of."

Dana flinched. "You ruin me with the company in any case," he said.

"Then come in with us," urged the man.

"We never go back on a pal. What's that for?" suspiciously, as Dana leaned out to signal with his light.

He made no answer, but turned in a moment, the signs of a struggle in his working face. "I'm with you, son, you give me no choice," he announced, and led the caboose to make his way to the engine. A jerking motion of the train showed him that the speed had been increased, and it was not without peril that he sprang across the couplings to the tender.

"Better that I should go under the wheels than aid in their purpose," he muttered, between his set teeth, and in another moment he had cut off the train.

"You signaled more speed," said the engineer, as he entered the cab. "What for? We were faster than regulation time, as it was."

"The couplings have parted," Dana explained. "Keep ahead."

It was a necessary caution. A steep downgrade of four miles lay ahead of them, and at the end of it was the river, spanned by a trestle-work sixty rods long.

The glaring headlight of the engine flashed over the surrounding landscape; the pursuing train rushed forward with increasing force, and the caboose, having no weight to hold it down, began to jump the rails and bounce back upon them with terrific jars.

"If them fellows don't put on the brakes, they'll go into the river as sure as fate," said the engineer, and not being railroad men the catastrophe overtook them.

The engine slowed as it neared the bridge and passed over in safety, but the caboose leaped clear off the rails, and tumbled completely over before it struck the water and sunk beneath it, while the loaded flat-cars following, kept the track and came to a stand on the other side.

An inquest was held upon the bodies of the two drowned wrecks, but the affair was adjourned until the next morning, as the mountain to any one, and Dana Shields alone knew of the loss which had threatened the company, or of the dangerous expedient by which he had saved it and himself.

Captain Dick Talbot, KING OF THE ROAD;

OR,
The Black-hoods of Shasta.

A wild story of life in the Cinnabar Valley; of the men who tell the men who rob—and the men who kill; of the battles fought in the mountains, and the places of the wild Western land, strange as the men who people the hills and valleys over which great Shasta rules.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN,
AUTHOR OF "OVERLAND KIT," "ROCKY MOUNTAIN ROB," "KENTUCK, THE SPORT," ETC.

CHAPTER XXV.

MEN WHO WERE NOT EXPECTED.

THE ambulance had been chosen with excellent judgment. The trail at this point traversed a small prairie, dotted here and there with clumps of timber, around and among which the road ran, and although, in addition to the driver, who, as we have stated, was fairly bristling with weapons, the best deputy the sheriff boasted sat on the box with a breech-loading rifle laid across his lap, his fingers on the trigger.

All due precaution seemed to be taken against a surprise, but who could expect a mortal man, or even one as well versed in the customs of the mountain region as the sheriff's deputy, when from an innocent-looking clump of timber a horseman rode, and, not ten paces from the trail, "covered" the official with a cocked rifle, and at the same moment the another man appeared on the right, one directly ahead and two in the rear.

Against such a force it was madness to offer resistance, and the sheriff fairly groaned when he realized that he had been so completely outwitted.

He sunk back in his seat and cursed his ill-luck. The prisoner laughed as he watched the expression upon the face of the burly official.

"Well, sheriff, I reckon that I won't ride to Yreka with you," he said, quietly.

"Durn the luck!" the sheriff cried. "Again you've played best trumps."

"A chance for you to carry out the Governor's order now," Cherokee suggested.

"I reckon that my life is worth as much to me as anybody else's, and I ain't anxious to cash my checks yet. The trick is, you know, pardner, and I pass." And with the word he unfurled the larfat which bound him to the prisoner. "Oh, no! I was to go for you I reckon that your gang would go for me, and so, no sugar in mine, thank you."

"A sensible conclusion!" Cherokee exclaimed. "Well, take care of yourself," and the prisoner moved to rise, but a sudden thought checked him.

"By the by, just have the kindness to unlock these playthings, will you?" he held up his wrists encircled by the steel bracelets as he spoke.

"Of course; anything to oblige," replied Dancer, with a grimace, and at once he produced the key and unlocked the handcuffs.

"And now my weapons, please. I'm sorry that I can't stay longer, but I cannot be always with you, you know."

With another wry face the sheriff presented Cherokee with the elegant tools which had so often stood him in good stead.

"Take care of yourself. See you again some time; and, sheriff, I won't be hard on you for your share in this night's work, for you have only done your duty, but for the others—well, when you get back to Cinnabar, just give my compliments to both the postmaster and the Governor, and tell them that I owe

them one, and that they may rest easy that I shall settle the obligation, for no man in the Shasta ever knew Cherokee to crawl out of paying his debts, whether the quittance was due in either coin or blood."

The quiet, determined tone fairly made the burly sheriff shiver, and mentally he thanked his lucky stars that he did not stand in the shoes of either Brockford or the Governor.

"So long!" ejaculated Cherokee, thrusting his weapons into their pockets, opening the door of the coach, and jumping out onto the moon-lit ground.

"Drive on!" cried a hoarse voice, the leader of the masked men speaking; and the command was at once obeyed.

On went the coach at its best speed, the driver applying the lash to the restive animals, and Cherokee, alarmed by the strange voice, glancing around him, with hand on weapons, discovered that he was in the hands of the Black-hoods!

No pals of Injun Dick had come to his rescue, but, on the contrary, the band of strangely-disguised men who had made a powerful name for themselves by wild and lawless deeds amid the hills of Shasta.

The coach went on a hundred yards or more, and then making a circle to the right, wheeled around and took the back trail toward Cinnabar. For once in his life, at any rate, if never before, the bold Cherokee had been taken entirely by surprise. He had been sure that the coach had been stopped that it was through the kindly devices of ardent friends, but when he looked around him and saw that he was surrounded by the road-agents, the Black-hoods of Shasta, he began to ask himself if he hadn't jumped out of the frying-pan into the fire.

The coach had disappeared in the distance, and the road-agents, still with leveled weapons in their hands, began to close in upon him.

If the strangers were friends they came in a very unfriendly fashion, and Cherokee, always a firm believer in the idea that the best way to meet danger was with a bold front, pulled out his revolver and prepared to stand upon the defensive.

The highwaymen at once perceived the design, and their leader called out:

"You fool! do you think that you can fight us?" "I reckon that I can try," Cherokee replied, decisively.

"We are five to one! If you are wise, you will throw down your weapons and surrender."

"Not by a jugful," was the answer. "I don't know what you want with me, but I'm going to find out before I allow you to come any nearer. You're all within range now, and I give you fair warning that I shall plumb some of you if you advance."

"We are friends."

"Prove it by putting up your weapons."

"Haven't we proved it by rescuing you from the sheriff?"

Cherokee picked up his ears at this question. How did they know who was in the coach?

"Why did you interfere in this matter? What is your little game?" he demanded.

"Well, we want just such a man as you."

"Oh, you do?"

"Yes; and since you have fallen out with the law, why, you had better fall in with us."

Cherokee had had an idea, when he first heard the voice of the speaker, that the man was no stranger to him, for his ears were wonderfully correct in this matter, and the way, and the voice of the man, the more certain he became that his suspicion was not without foundation.

"I'm very much obliged to you for your offer, but I'm the poorest man in the world to work in company. When I am not all for myself, I am not really worth anything."

"Oh, you wrong yourself, I am sure, and we are quite willing to run the risk," the outlaw replied. "Come, say that you will join us, and you shall have a good position in the band. Remember that we have just saved you from the hangman's rope."

"Ah! I'm not so sure of that," Cherokee replied, quickly. "There's many a slip between the cup and the lip, and to my thinking the chances are ten to one that I would have slipped through the hands of the sheriff between Yreka and Sacramento—that is, supposing that my worthy friend the sheriff had ever succeeded in getting me to Yreka, and I have serious doubts in my mind."

"Mebbe you could have fooled the sheriff, but you can't fool us," the outlaw retorted. "We know all about you, Mister Dick Talbot; we know how you offered to buy your pardon from the Governor by hunting us down, and now that we have got you, we don't want to put you shall either join our band or else we'll put you where you won't trouble anybody any more, in this world."

Although outnumbered five to one, and the road-agents were armed with rifles as well as with revolvers, Cherokee was about to bid them to mortal combat, when he fell the victim of a wily trick.

The moment Cherokee had sprung from the coach, one of the outlaws in the rear had slipped off his horse and sneaked into one of the little clumps of timber, and then, during the conversation, had taken advantage of the cover afforded by the bushes to approach quite close to the spot where Cherokee stood, and at the critical moment, when a bloody fight seemed close at hand, with a dextrous cast of a lasso, with which he was armed, and which he used with all the skill and adroitness of a herdsman of the Lower Californian plains where the horn-horned steers roam, he transversed the outlaw's path.

The prisoner had not expected any such attack as this, and had not been on the watch to guard against it, and so fell an easy prey.

The road-agents closed in at once upon him, jumping in hot haste from their horses. They bound him and took away his weapons. Cherokee made no resistance when once fairly in their hands, for he realized that it would be fruitless; fortune seemed to frown upon him now.

"Well," cried the road-agent who had previously carried on the conversation, "I reckon that you ain't a-going to have much chance about this matter, now; it is to be as we say."

"No; I might as well die now as to go on for a week or two and then be strung up like a dog by a rope."

"You ain't half so smart as you think you are!" the outlaw exclaimed. "We have been playing ruses on you, old man. We don't want you to join us; it was our little game to get you into our hands, for we've got the same arrangement with the Governor. You tried to make. You didn't make the rifle, but we did. You death secures our pardon, so I reckon that we won't be in any danger of wearing a hempen neck-tie yet awhile, and how is that for high?"

CHAPTER XXVI.

CIRCUMSTANCES ALTER.

"The fact is, young man, we've stole your trick and the game is ours!" exclaimed another one of the road-agents, in tones only too well known to the prisoner, and when he had finished the speech the man removed the black hood which he wore and revealed the strongly-marked features of Brockford, the postmaster.

Cherokee realized at once that he was in a position of great danger. He understood now who the men were, with the matches of counterfeit on their faces, who had taken up the postmaster's quarrel with the Bella Union girl.

"You were going to hunt the Black-hoods, but they have saved you the trouble by hunting you," Brockford continued, grimly, "and your death secures our pardon; and now, since we want to be easy with you, we'll give you the choice of how to die—what means do you prefer?"

"I might answer like the Irishman in story that I would prefer to be hanged on a gooseberry bush, and being in no hurry for my time to come would wait until it grew, but I don't suppose that you would appreciate the joke."

"Three means of death are open to you," Brockford replied, sternly, by no means relinishing the levity of the other. "Steel, lead or rope; which do you prefer?"

"Oh, I'm not at all particular; go ahead, and fix it any way you like."

"Rig a lariat from a tree branch, yonder," Brockford commanded, "I never saw a man

hanged in all my life, and I've quite a curiosity to see the sight." The postmaster was striving to imitate the coolness of the prisoner.

"It wouldn't be a bad idea, and it will give you some little inkling of how you will be apt to feel when you are swung off," Cherokee retorted.

"The rope is not spun that will hang me!" Brockford cried.

"Oh, yes, it is, and made and exposed for sale in some store in Cinnabar, and when Judge Lynch rises, one of these eyes and the angry miners with arms in their hands hunt you out of your holes in the mountains, you won't be given any choice of death but will be strung up to the first tree handy as a warning to other outlaws; you'll die with your boots on, and I'll bet a hundred dollars on it."

These idle words irritated Brockford terribly, and he at once hurried up the preparation for the hanging match.

A lariat was passed over a projecting tree-branch, a running noose made in one end, and Cherokee being placed under the tree the loop was adjusted about his neck.

"Mighty low down branch for a hanging scrape," one of the road-agents suggested.

"It's just as long as my foot don't touch the ground," just so long as my foot don't touch the ground, it will work. Now, then, Mr. Cherokee, Injun Dick, Captain Talbot, or whatever else you may be pleased to call yourself, I'll give you just five minutes by the watch to say your prayers, and as he spoke the postmaster took out his timepiece.

It was an impressive picture, and one hardly to be witnessed in any other land.

The moonlight was beginning to fade away and the faint light of the coming dawn was apparent in the eastern skies.

Cherokee stood under the tree, the rope around his neck; two of the road-agents at the other end of the rope had attached it to the horn of a Mexican saddle of one of their horses and stood on the hand of the animal, prepared to lead it away, and by the action to launch the prisoner into the other world at the signal of the chief of the gang.

Death indeed did seem to be fearfully near, and yet Cherokee, calm beneath the tree, as clear-eyed and as calm of face as though he had not even the interest of a spectator in the scene.

Brockford closed his watch with a sharp snap. "The five minutes are up!" he exclaimed; "give me your mule team!"

"Get up!" cried one of the road-agents, smacking the haunch of the animal with his hand.

The horse bent itself to the somewhat unaccustomed strain, but hardly had the rope tightened around Talbot's neck when the sharp crack of a rifle sound on the still morning air, and a loud shout some dark forms sprung out from the concealment of one of the timber clumps and charged forward upon the road-agents, and these warlike, always more ready to run than fight, took to the heels at once.

Nimble they scampered to their horses, vaulted upon their backs and fled at the top of their speed, never stopping to look behind them or to take account of the number of the foe.

Brockford was so severely and as soon as any of his men, for more than any of the rest he dreaded recognition.

The five road-agents had been put to flight by two men, Bowers, the irrepressible vagabond, and the Indian, Mud-turtle, Cherokee's steadfast friend.

As Cherokee had informed the sheriff, his friends watched as well by night as by day, for from the moment that Cherokee had entered the jail, the Indian had never taken his eyes off it, and therefore as soon as the sheriff departed in the coach with his prisoner, Cherokee's two faithful followers procured their horses and at once set out in pursuit.

Following close behind the coach, awaiting a favorable opportunity to attempt a rescue, they were alarmed by the approach of Brockford and his gang, and, concealing themselves by the roadside, allowed the others to pass. They suspected that an assault on the prisoner was in progress, for Bowers had a shrewd suspicion that Brockford was in some way connected with the matter, and so they waited until he had formed a bad opinion of the postmaster.

And so, being fully warned, the pair had witnessed the Black-hoods wrest the sheriff's prisoner from his hands, and taken advantage of a favorable chance to advance to Cherokee's rescue.

The sudden parting of the lariat, severed by the ball from the Indian's rifle, had dropped Cherokee all in a heap to the ground, and now that he had got upon his feet again, his road-agents were in full flight, and his friends in full possession of the field.

Mud-turtle hastened to cut the lariat that bound Cherokee's hands, while Bowers, as was his wont, commenced to brag of the feat which had been performed.

"I tell you, my noble dook! that war a mighty hefty trick!" he exclaimed. "Never in all time did I see pilgrims like these hyer git up and duster quicker!"

And then, in answer to Cherokee's question, Bowers explained how it happened, and that they had come so aptly to his rescue, and he in turn was astonished when informed by Cherokee that Brockford was the chief of the Black-hoods.

"And henceforth," continued Cherokee, "it will be our task to hunt these Black-hoods down. Mud-turtle, you must keep a watch upon the postmaster, and track him to the secret haunt of the Black-hoods among the hills. Brockford, of course, will return to the town and pursue his business as usual, although he knows I am after him, and he is one of the road-agents, but he will rely upon the fact that so long as this accusation is hanging over me, I shall not be able to show my face in Cinnabar; but if I can go there as Cherokee, I can as some one else, and I reckon I can assume a disguise that will baffie the eyes even of my bitterest foe, for in the town I must be. I've got a plan in my head in regard to the Governor I intend to work before I am a month older. I'm going to try some of his own tricks on himself."

"Big thing!" cried Bowers. The Indian merely nodded assent; Mud-turtle was always sparing of words.

"If the Governor was any common man, after the way in which he has treated me, it would be either his life or mine. If he refused to give me satisfaction by a fair fight, I'd cow him in presence of the whole town, but as he is the Governor of the State, and has the par-donnee power in his hands, I mean to pursue a different tack with him, and I mean to have it all offends done in the past, and I mean to have it. Now, my idea is this: I'm going to kidnap his excellency, carry him off to the mountains, and keep him there until he agrees to what I want."

"But he may back out of it under the plea that you used compulsion, when he is set at liberty," suggested Bowers.

"I have thought of that; but first I shall hunt him down and destroy this Black-hood band, and when that is accomplished, I'll see that I am decidedly in earnest and that he will not be acting wisely if he attempts to either trifle or brave me. And then, too, the destruction of the road-agents will afford him the opportunity of showing his magnanimity, for of course he must be able to give some reason to the public for the act, since the people at large haven't the best opinion in the world of me; and yet, Heaven knows nearly every one of my private deeds, which has offended the majesty of the law, has been forced upon me by circumstances utterly beyond my control."

There seems to be an evil genius who takes delight in pursuing me, and each and every time that I get fairly settled down to a quiet life, some untoward event brings me into some violent contest, despite my efforts to avoid trouble."

"You'll find peace, some time," Bowers remarked, consolingly.

"Yes, in the grave; nowhere else, I fear," Cherokee replied. "But come, we must get back to Cinnabar, for I've got to change into some body else before morning."

In three minutes they were on the road.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 481.)

The Sailor's Temptation.

BY C. D. CLARK.

I KNOWN Jack Fisher from the time we went to school together, on the shores of old Cape Cod, said Walt Turner, my better half, my dear shipmate never made an eye-splice or handled a capstan-bar. You know what Cape Cod boys are, mates; all we think of is to get old enough to ship, and when that time comes, we go to sea. But Jack Fisher was another sort of boy than me; he took to education, naturally, and I didn't keer for that, and I always wondered that he took such a liking to me.

As if any one on earth could have helped liking the old sea-dog, with his open, manly face, and strong, true, honest eyes. A sort of laugh went round the fo'ksel, and the old sailor grinned, and went on:

And our time came at last and we shipped to do other on a three years' cruise. Afore we came back had a hard time of it, and Jack was booked for third mate of the ship, and he had settled quietly into my place, the harpinner's seat. This old pair of mine seems nat'rally to fit the iron, and ez fur me, I don't want any better berth than that.

But we went away, boys, and came back men, and old a handsome, straight-built fellow, with an eye like a hawk, and the most winning smile I ever seen upon a human face. Boys, I have heard of the love of David and Jonathan, the passing of love of woman, and I think that the way I loved Jack Fisher; and it was the word aboard the ship that some day that love would be tried; and the time came.

We loved the same woman. I'd seen her first, the prettiest little maid in our port, the trimmest little clipper on that stretch of beach from Cape Cod to Nantucket. I go and I had sometimes, and I seem to see her as she looked the day when I knowed I loved her, but didn't dare tell her so.

I didn't love her less because I was afraid to speak, and I sometimes think of I had spoken first, so true a heart she had, that she would be my wife to-day. But I only looked at her as a man looks at a beautiful star, something they like, but couldn't reach. All the sailors knew that I loved her and made a jest of it, but they didn't joke too loud, for I had a heavy hand, then days, and they knowed it.

The ship was to sail soon, and just at nightfall I went down the beach toward the farm with my mind made up to speak to her that night, if it killed me, my path took me across a point of woods, and then out of the woods up on the beach again, an' just as I cleared the wood, I heard voices, and stopped.

Jack Fisher and Milly Deane! They came down the beach together, and I see that their hands were clasped, and her eyes looking love to me, an' then I knowed that the man I loved had stolen my one woman of all the women on the earth.

As I stood there staring, my mind in a whirl, Jack saw me.

"Oh, Walt, old fellow, dear old boy," he said, in his fresh, manly voice; "I'm glad you've come, because I want to tell you that Milly is to be my wife when we come home again."

I don't know what I said or how I got away, but I saw in Milly's face that she understood what he did not, that I loved her, and was half mad and ready almost for a crime. He didn't see it, God bless him—he didn't dream that anything could come between us, even a woman.

And I went upon the beach and lay there until I saw Jack push off his boat, and Milly came down the beach alone and found me lying on my face in the yielding sand, and praying that the rising tide might sweep me away; never more to be seen by mortal eyes. But she saw me, stopped, an' laid her hand upon my shoulder.

"Stand up, Walter," she said, softly. "I want to speak to you."

I had to obey her whether I wanted to or not, as she slipped over the boat, rapidly vanishing in the distance.

"There he goes, Walter, your friend, my lover. Bring him back to me safe, or I shall die. And let me say to you, Walter, that nothing, nothing, remember, must come between you and John Fisher."

"I'll do my best," I said. "But you know, Milly, how hard it will be."

The ship sailed and we in her. For awhile I had a hard fight to meet my old friend kindly, but he was so frank and free, so unsuspecting of evil, that I couldn't find it in my heart to keep it hardened against him. Yet there were times when, in spite of myself, the thought crept into my mind that if he were to die I might weep Milly yet.

But the days went on and still we headed to the south to round the stormy Cape. Jack began to see something of a change in me, God knows I didn't mean to let him see it, and somehow a kindness crept into our intercourse, I can't tell how. And yet, it drove me half-mad, sometimes, to think that woman's face should part us, and I fought a hard fight with the evil in my own heart.

One night after we had run down Terra del Fuogo, and had the sea under our lee, there came a time which tried me as I have never tried before. I was standing on the rail, looking ahead, when I heard a snapping sound, and saw Jack Fisher falling from the lee foremast-head.

How he came to fall I don't know, for a surer-footed sailor never trod on a rope, but something had parted aloft, and down he came. Lucky for him it was that as he fell he heeled over, or he would have dropped to the deck crushed out of the image of humanity there.

But he fell into the sea under my very eyes, and I only saw him fall.

My hour of temptation had come, mates. I had only to stand there and see him go out of sight forever in the deep-blue waters, for he was stranded in the fall, and going down like a stone. It was only for a moment the devil held me fast, and then the face of Milly, as I saw her last, floated before me; an' my spirit was set free.

"Man overboard!" I yelled. "Bring the ship to!"

And I went down head-first into the boiling water under the stern, and as I trod water and looked about me I caught a glimpse of his pale face and staring eyes as he went down for the last time. In a moment more I was after him, and when I rose again I was breathing up the senseless form of my best friend, and had forgotten all except my love for him.

The ship sailed on, while my cries sounded above the dark water, and a dozen heads appeared above the rail. Then the sails shivered, and I heard the creaking of the davits as a boat dropped into the water.

Would they be in time?

I felt the body of Jack Fisher resting like a lump of lead upon my arm, and seemed to hear him say, "I struggled hard, but I couldn't get my eyes fixed upon the coming boat, but at every moment I sunk lower and lower, and it was as much as I could do to keep his head above the waves. I'm glad to think at this day, that I didn't give up the hope, only I wanted to save him for Milly."

But the boat did not reach me; a blur seemed to come before my eyes, an' then I knew no more until my eyes opened upon the deck of the old whaler, and I knew that I was safe.

"Jack!" I whispered to the man who bent over me.

"All right; you saved him!"

"Thank God!"

"I'm glad no more for three days, and when I came to myself I was lying in his bunk, and he was watching over me. I've had some good and bad luck since that time, but never shall I know so much joy as I did when I knew that I had saved him for Milly."

They've been married many years now, and have children growing up, and they say that when his old hulk is too weather-strained to cruise longer, must run into port with them. But I think I'll end my life upon the sea an' be buried under the waves I've loved so long. I think she'll be sorry who knows!

And the old sail was silent, and a hush fell upon the crew in the fo'ksel.

TO ADVERTISERS.

A few Advertisements will be inserted on this page at the rate of fifty cents per line, nonpareil measurement.

A Special Offer to the Star Journal Readers!

In order to extend the already wide and growing circulation of the well-known popular

LIBRARIES

published by Beadle and Adams, viz.:

Dime Library!

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MARRIED TOO YOUNG.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

My wife she was a beautiful thing,
And it need not be told
That when I wed I wed for love—
She married me for gold.
I'd past the vanities of youth
And settled down serene,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

I only had been wed three times
The happiest marriage did I think
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.
Our ages seemed so suitable,
And at a happy mean,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

My head might lack a hair or two
Perhaps, of being bald,
A tooth or two, I'm sure, saved me
From being toothless called.
My head was surely wise with age,
My love was saccharine,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

It was a fashionable match,
As everybody said,
She need not think that other girls
Would turn her husband's head;
And this assuring fact I know
By her was plainly seen,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

That she would never grow old to me
She ought have surely known,
Also because I'm somewhat lame
From her I'd never have down.
Her people all were proud of me,
And well they should have been,
For I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

But ah, my wife was young and vain
While I was old and wise—
More than a father to her
In all the name implies.
"Grandfather, then you are," said she,
With proud and naughty mien—
Though I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

She got to calling me "old man,"
Which I thought very rude;
To wear a cap and dress in gray,
Indeed, she never would.
She wanted to be vain and gay,
And dress like a May-queen,
Though I was only seventy-four
And she was seventeen.

She had a very foolish head,
And I could plainly see,
Though somewhat blind, that she did not
Her old make of me.
She ran off with another man!
Was ever such shame seen?
And she is only thirty-three!
And she is seventeen.

I know my heart would break to-day
Were it not old and tough;
Why she a young man should prefer
To me is strange enough.
The fault is she was far too young
To suit me; so I mean
To wed again at nineteen—
A wife of, say—nineteen!

The Condor-Killers;

OR,
WILD ADVENTURES AT THE EQUATOR.

BY T. C. HARBAUGH,

AUTHOR OF "SNOW-SHOE TOM," ETC.

VI.

THE STRANGE TRAP IS SPRUNG—JACK'S FIRST

CONDOR.

HAVING divested the cow's carcass of the skin, Elgardo cut out some great hunks of flesh which he covered with his cloak and then, assisted by the boy Narah, who were still a loss to conjecture how he was going to catch a condor, he rolled the body to a cliff near at hand and dropped it into a valley far below. This valley was covered with a growth of prickly bushes into whose depths the condor would not venture after the faintest morsel; and the Peruvian boy, smiling at the wonderment depicted upon the faces of his companions, returned to the hide.

As he did so, he looked up and with a cry of "condor!" he pointed to a dark speck in the sky. He strained their eyes as they would, they could see nothing but the serenest of skies. Not a cloud was in sight, much less the dark pinions of the vulture king of the Cordilleras.

Getting to his singular task again, Elgardo carried the hide into a large open place, the fleshy side he fastened the pieces of meat with cords made from the sinews of the llama and huancu, and having concealed Nicholas and Jack at a spot from which they could see the trap and not be seen in return, by the peering eyes of the condor, the ingenious boy went back to the device, and with a smile of self-satisfaction, crept under the skin!

"Catching a condor with a cow-skin will prove as successful as catching a fly old bird with chaff," said the incredulous Jack, in low tones to his companion.

"I am not willing to confirm your judgment, Jack," was the reply.

"You'll confirm it presently and help me laugh at Elgardo's scheme. A fellow like that would stick to a tree and grapple with a jaguar single-handed would be the very chap to attempt to catch a gigantic bird, and one of the shrewdest of the feathered family, with such a ludicrous device as he has fixed up."

Nicholas, the student, did not reply. He had more confidence in Elgardo's condor-trap, though he could not see how the boy would secure his prize.

In seeking food the condor depends almost entirely upon its keenness of vision. From his station in mid-air, even beyond the range of the Cordillera hunter, he notes a carcass and at once descends. His sense of smell is very poor; a piece of raw meat wrapped in a paper and placed before him will not attract his attention.

Our impatient friends did not have to wait long for the appearance of the great bird of prey. A finger laid on Jack's arm told him that the quick eye of Nicholas had detected the condor, and a glance upward showed him the great bird descending slowly. Nearer and nearer, in concentric circles, came the condor, and at last his talons sunk into the flesh that crowned the hide. Then he fell at once to gorging himself, tearing the meat and devouring it with disgusting voracity. Nearer and nearer pressed his wonderment at Elgardo's inactivity.

"Ha! ha!" laughed the boy. "My little Peruvian is caught in his own trap. He is afraid of the bird he has called from the skies. The condor has caught the boy, not the boy the condor. There is the best shot I shall ever get at the air-king!" and the speaker seized his rifle; but the hand of his companion was laid upon it.

"No, Jack. We must not offend Elgardo. You forget that we owe him our lives. Think of the jaguar last night. My word for it that he is not lying inactive beneath the skin, for a minute since I saw a hand rise from beneath it, and it held a rope."

"A rope? I did not see it. What can the boy be doing?"

"We must wait. What! another condor? That is one more than the boy has bargained for."

Sure enough a second condor pounced upon the meat, and speedily fell to devouring it. The train did not fight for the spots; but side by side the flesh which already beneath the warm rays of the sun was becoming putrid. To our young adventurers the sight before them was exciting, and it was with difficulty, notwithstanding his late words, that Nicholas could prevent his young friend from firing at the birds.

But a new scene was about to burst upon their vision.

The trap was about to be sprung; and all at once Elgardo shot from beneath the skin with a

loud cry, and turning toward our friends called them forth.

The eager boys did not waste time in obeying the summons, and as they leaped from the retreat, the condors attempted to escape.

But in vain!

Jack now saw that Elgardo had not remained idle during his sojourn under the skin, nor had he wished to leave it before he did.

The birds, uttering their peculiar cries, continued the hissing voice of the geese, continued to attempt flight; but a number of strong cords had been tied about their legs while they were gorging themselves. These cords were also fastened to the heavy and unwieldy hide, which they could not, tied as they were, carry aloft.

For many moments the trio enjoyed, to a certain degree, the struggles of the gigantic birds. "Cow-skin catch condor after all, eh?" cried Elgardo, turning a look of triumph upon Jack.

"In this way," Cordillera herdsman catches many hundreds in a year. Sometimes, when he wants to kill many at once, he kills a mule and puts the carcass on the edge of a pit, so balanced that it will easily fall over. Pretty soon the sky is black with the great birds, and down they pounce upon it. Then by fighting over the meat, they draw it over the edge and it falls down into the pit. Not willing to lose it they follow it down and gorge themselves so that they cannot rise. Then come the people, and with stones and clubs they put the birds to death."

"So, señors, you see we have many traps for the condor. This is but one of them. Now I will bolla one."

So saying, Elgardo drew forth his bolas—that indispensable companion of the Indian of Peru—and took the lighter ball in his hand. Then for a moment he swung the other two in a wide circle over his head, and suddenly sent the strange weapon forward. A moment later the aim told, for the weapon encompassed the neck of one of the condors, and after a few vigorous great wings grew still, and the bird dropped upon the hide.

"Now, my boy," said Elgardo, turning to Jack, "you shall slay your first condor."

But Jack would not shoot a captive. Can't you unloose him?"

The Peruvian boy smiled.

"We'll see, little señor," he said, and drawing his knife, he stepped toward the remaining bird.

When at a distance of twenty feet from him, Elgardo halted, and seizing the glittering blade at the point drew his right arm back.

"Ready?" he said, glancing over his shoulder.

Jack cocked his rifle and fixed his sparkling eyes on the monster of the air. Elgardo stood for a moment with the knife drawn back, and then sent it whizzing forward. A loud shout of applause from Nicholas attested the success of the throw. The North American Indian could not have thrown his tomahawk with greater precision. The knife had cut the cord that prevented the condor's flight, and as it was the last bird to the feast, and consequently not so gorged as its companion, it rose at once into the air.

"Up, up went the condor! Jack, though covering it, did not fire."

"Quick!" cried Nicholas, sharing the excitement of the moment.

"Quick, señor, or el condor will escape."

But the young hunter did not touch the trigger until the noble bird had been given a fair chance for life. Then a loud report burst upon the ears of all, and the vulture-king fell over and began to descend.

"Hurrah!" shouted Nicholas, carried away with enthusiasm. A shot good enough to invoke the envy of the Condor.

"I hit him in the head; wait and see!" replied Jack, in calm triumph.

A moment later the condor reached the ground, and Elgardo and Nicholas were surprised to see the boy's condor, who had been shot, had passed through the brain of the bird!

Not a little pleased with their adventure, the trio left the spot and continued their journey toward Albo's hut. Jack carried away several wing feathers of the bird as souvenirs of his first condor.

By Elgardo's guidance the hut was reached at the close of day; but not a living object greeted them. The absence of the pet puma was remarked by the Peruvian boy; but a surprise greater than that awaited them in the hut. Upon entering the hut, they found everything that belonged to Jack and Nicholas standing in the center of the room.

"Some one has been here!" cried Nicholas.

"Albo's!" said Elgardo. "See! he has taken only his own property. If the vulture had settled his mind, it has also frightened him from this country. He will never return. We will find his mule gone."

An examination revealed this: the Condor-hunter's beast was missing, while those belonging to the trio remained behind; he had, in fact, for a minute the three gazed into each other's faces.

"What is to be done now, señors?" asked Elgardo. "I know the paths that lead to the llama, and the Peruvian boy executed a courteous bow."

"To Lima!" echoed Jack. "Who wants to go back now! Do you know the Amazonian valley?"

Elgardo smiled proudly, and said as he executed a second salutation:

"As well as I know the passes of the Cordilleras."

"Then lead us to it!" was the reply. "We'll postpone our grand llama-hunt. Elgardo, we club you and your intended wife, this expedition. Downward! is the motto. Three tickets for the valley of the Amazon!"

"By-m-by the little señor will hunt the shortest path to Lima," said Elgardo in a whisper to Nicholas, as he displayed his pearly teeth.

"Down you go in a paragon of beauty, the land of the bow, and the home of the porocorra!"

(To be continued—commenced in No. 484.)

My First Exploit.

BY SYLVESTER MARLIN.

"FOLLY! Folly, my child! The man has absolutely nothing and no prospects. A very proper fellow, I admit, but not a mate for you, Dolly. And the idea of your being so infatuated with him! Pshaw!"

"But it is not infatuation, father. I love Eldyn Harman! I have promised to be his wife."

"Give him up at once! I command it."

"You forget that I am of age to-day, and legally competent to choose for myself."

"Rebel! But wait. Wait, at least, until we know something more of this Eldyn Harman."

I had been in the city of Baltimore some months, on the look-out for anything that might prove lucrative. Having the polish of a college education, and thanks to introductory letters from my professors, I managed to retain my place in good society. But men have to work in some way, if they would live contentedly.

Of all the fair faces it had been my fortune to meet with none so beautiful in beauty as Delora Montello. For a while I worshipped in silence. Then, forgetting my almost impoverished condition, yielding to pure and absorbing passion, I declared myself and was accepted. We loved most ardently. Many evenings of happiness comprised my after visits to the handsome country home on the York Road. Of course, I explained to Delora, and she was willing to wait until I could provide a suitable home and income for ourselves.

With this powerful incentive, I struggled harder than ever to secure a position. My luck altered suddenly and favorably. Through an old college chum, I became acquainted personally with a famous firm of detectives on Calvert street; finally, was taken in by them on probation. The next I knew, I found myself

wearing a badge of authority, and in my ears rung the serious injunction:

"Now, see if you can prove yourself valuable."

It had never struck me that I was cut out for the rôle of a detective; but I was in the business, and no mistake, waiting for an opportunity to display my talent, if I had any.

This evening I had entered the parlor of Guy Montello, the broker, unannounced—a habit not unusual after my betrothal with Delora—and the first thing I heard, issuing distinctly from the adjoining room, was the bit of conversation quoted.

Presently Delora came in. She greeted me with the accustomed smile and kiss. But I could observe that she was ill at ease. She must have known that I overheard her father's speech, but no allusion was made to it. At ten o'clock I took my departure.

Crossing the porch, my eye caught something which slid and scraped ahead of me. A pocket-book!—full, too! Belonging to Mr. Montello, perhaps. I half-turned to inquire as to its ownership; but the shutters were already closed, and it would be useless to disturb the inmates of the house by sounding the door-bell at that late hour. Next time I called would answer.

Imagine my astonishment when, the following morning, the head of our department placed in my hands the following epistle:

"MESSRS. BLANKS—Detectives.
GENTLEMEN:
I have to announce to you the loss, on last night, of a pocket-book containing \$1,000. It was lying on my desk in a room near the parlor. No one has visited the house or been seen near the premises, except a young man of the city, by name, Eldyn Harman. While I have reason to suspect, I have not sufficient ground for accusation. The matter is placed in your hands. If you desire further particulars, call at my office, No. —, Exchange Place.
Respectfully,
"GUY MONTELLO."

"What does it mean?" asked the chief.
"Mean?"—I was crimson to the temples.
"Why, here is the pocket-book. I found it on the porch when leaving, late last night, and intended to return it to-night."

"Were you with Mr. Montello in his private room?"
"Whom did you see there?"
Again I flushed; but replied:
"It is necessary for me to state that Miss Montello and myself are betrothed. My visits there are quite lawful."

"Oh! And were you with her every minute of your stay?"
"Yes, every minute, as I am sure she will inform you if required."

At this juncture a messenger appeared, bearing a note from Mr. Montello. It was a note from Mr. Montello, dated at his residence, York Road, and ran as follows:

"GENTLEMEN:
"Since my last communication to you, I have suffered another loss. \$1,000 in U. S. bonds are missing from the same desk from which the pocket-book was stolen. I had placed them there in view of a negotiation for to-day. If we can find the party who wounded men, discharged from hospital, and turned out of the cars into a desolate place, with six inches of half-melted snow on the ground, just about sunset."

"There, men," said the quartermaster, looking out of his office at stable office at our shivering party. "There is your ground. Go into camp and make yourselves comfortable."

Comfortable! It looked like a hopeless task. There was the valley white with snow, a few black stumps peeping through; on each side the hills towering up, and at the top of the hills a scanty fringe of scrubby oaks and beeches. Nevertheless, it is an actual fact that, in less than an hour after, our party was ensconced in a row of little white shelter tents, the ground dry beneath us, and in front of each tent, a blazing fire, on which simmered our little coffee-pots, while a big frying-pan sputtered merrily under the hissing pork. We were actually "comfortable" and slept "like tops" that night.

And what was the mystery of our comfort? Very simple. Each man had a piece of shelter tent, a haversack with some pork and hard-tack, and a little india-rubber bag of coffee and sugar, while one of the party had borrowed an ax. That, with a blanket apiece and an india-rubber poncho, was all our provision for comfort, and with it we soon procured all the rest. The coming on of a sharp frost which hardened the ground under the snow, made our labors easier; but even in mud we have seen good comfortable camps made, where wood is plenty.

To the parties of boys wishing to camp out, we have a few words of advice better than all else: take a few things with you as you can. The essentials are a knife and hatchet to each member of the party, a woolen blanket and a rubber bag with bows to keep them dry. All the rest you can do without, if you are in the woods, where game is plenty and fish abundant. Even bread is not so essential as you would think; and if you cannot get on without it, take it in the form of food to make cakes. One frying-pan to the party, a quart cup and a pint cup, both of tin, to each, and at least one box of matches in a water-tight tin case to every person in the crowd, and you are set up for cooking.

Fishing-rods are of course valuable where fish are plenty, but lines and hooks are the only real necessities, as rods can be cut wherever hazel grows. Guns are also valuable, but—except hands, will kill game as well as guns, without frightening all the other game in the neighborhood.

The fact is, as Maurice Thompson frequently observes, that a careful cultivation of the use of the long bow leads to innumerable pleasures, and we have known a party of boys furnished with bows to keep themselves in food in a wooded country for a ten-days' trip with great results in the way of pleasure.

There are all sorts of birds and animals in the great woods of Orange, Delaware, Ulster, Greene and dozens of other counties that could be named in New York State alone, that are plentiful and good to eat. All Pennsylvania and every Midland State is full of such squirrels, opossums, raccoons, chipmunks, hares, jays, robins, none very shy and only needing patience and a sure aim to bring them down.

To acquire the art of shooting game with the bow and arrow is by no means a matter of great difficulty to a healthy boy with good eyesight. As Maurice Thompson suggests, targets are of little use to shoot at as practice for game practice. A rubber ball suspended from a string under a tree in front of a high bank of soft earth is the proper target for the would-be archer.

Beginning at a distance of ten or twelve feet, and gradually increasing till the mark can be struck nine times out of ten at a hundred feet the progress made in a week's steady drill is amazing. The high bank catches the waste arrows and saves trouble in hunting for them; but when a boy can hit a common rubber ball at a hundred feet, stationary or slightly swinging, he is quite fit to begin at a hare, squirrel or jay.

The archer does not pretend to shoot his game flying. He has no need. His silent arrow does not scare all the animals in the neighborhood like the loud thunder of the double-barrel gun, and he can live for weeks in plenty, in a place where the gun-hunter would soon drive every feather and hair in the way of game out of the country.

As for fish, many a party of artists on sketching tours in the Adirondacks lives on little else for weeks, in places where the trout are so thick that one may catch twenty pounds in an hour. With these preliminary remarks let us next consider how one can do best in the hot months by camping out.

Let us start with a party of only four boys, who are all hard worked in city offices and who have a two weeks' vacation which they wish to spend in the woods. They are boys getting only \$5 a week and each has \$10 saved up, which, with his two weeks' vacation pay, gives him \$30—or a total of \$80 in the party. Prob-

ably the father of my betrothed was guiltless of any real intent to injure me. The case was one of those which frequently occur: such an intense occupation of the mind by one subject while awake that it still held the brain when asleep. The remarkable part, however, consists in that, while no definite plan for getting rid of me had been devised during waking moments, the plot was conceived in absolute slumber. He confessed to having dreamed something of the kind, but invariably forgot it on awakening. The discovery of the bonds was an honest surprise to him.

"Well, Mr. Montello," said the chief, in conclusion, "Mr. Harman has earned the \$2,000 reward. You had better pay it over to him and let it go toward defraying expenses of the wedding trip. We'll keep the episode out of the papers, so far as real names are concerned."

And so it was arranged. My first exploit as a detective was to secure myself a good wife. I have performed much more difficult tasks during several years now spent in the service.

NOTE.—Owing to the pressure of matter on our columns this week several questions are held over to answer in our next.

Camping Out.
I.

ONE of our young friends asks us for a set of papers on "Camping Out," on the plea that vacation is near, and that he and his friends want to go to a little about how to do it, where to and what to carry.

We are the more willing to help our young friends with our advice, because the pleasantest memories of our life are connected with the camp-fire, and because the greater part of four years of our existence was passed in open air, or under canvas. Many a time since that have we been tempted to leave the hot, dusty city in June and July, and to join the noble army of tramps, who camp out all the time, and we have always advised every young friend who has asked us for advice where to spend his vacation, to "go to the woods and camp out."

We are also glad to say that whenever our advice has been taken, the youngsters who have gone out, have always come back to thank us for giving them a good time. There is, in fact, a party of boys who go out to the wild woods with the determination to rough it by camping out, so long as the weather is fine.

We should not advise any party to start on such a tour in November. A winter camp has its charms, but they are only accessible to old hands, who know the secrets of camping and how to make themselves comfortable. We remember well being one of such a party, years ago, in a wild West Virginia valley, all recently wounded men, discharged from hospital, and turned out of the cars into a desolate place, with six inches of half-melted snow on the ground, just about sunset.

"There, men," said the quartermaster, looking out of his office at stable office at our shivering party. "There is your ground. Go into camp and make yourselves comfortable."

Comfortable! It looked like a hopeless task. There was the valley white with snow, a few black stumps peeping through; on each side the hills towering up, and at the top of the hills a scanty fringe of scrubby oaks and beeches. Nevertheless, it is an actual fact that, in less than an hour after, our party was ensconced in a row of little white shelter tents, the ground dry beneath us, and in front of each tent, a blazing fire, on which simmered our little coffee-pots, while a big frying-pan sputtered merrily under the hissing pork. We were actually "comfortable" and slept "like tops" that night.

And what was the mystery of our comfort? Very simple. Each man had a piece of shelter tent, a haversack with some pork and hard-tack, and a little india-rubber bag of coffee and sugar, while one of the party had borrowed an ax. That, with a blanket apiece and an india-rubber poncho, was all our provision for comfort, and with it we soon procured all the rest. The coming on of a sharp frost which hardened the ground under the snow, made our labors easier; but even in mud we have seen good comfortable camps made, where wood is plenty.

To the parties of boys wishing to camp out, we have a few words of advice better than all else: take a few things with you as you can. The essentials are a knife and hatchet to each member of the party, a woolen blanket and a rubber bag with bows to keep them dry. All the rest you can do without, if you are in the woods, where game is plenty and fish abundant. Even bread is not so essential as you would think; and if you cannot get on without it, take it in the form of food to make cakes. One frying-pan to the party, a quart cup and a pint cup, both of tin, to each, and at least one box of matches in a water-tight tin case to every person in the crowd, and you are set up for cooking.

Fishing-rods are of course valuable where fish are plenty, but lines and hooks are the only real necessities, as rods can be cut wherever hazel grows. Guns are also valuable, but—except hands, will kill game as well as guns, without frightening all the other game in the neighborhood.

The fact is, as Maurice Thompson frequently observes, that a careful cultivation of the use of the long bow leads to innumerable pleasures, and we have known a party of boys furnished with bows to keep themselves in food in a wooded country for a ten-days' trip with great results in the way of pleasure.

There are all sorts of birds and animals in the great woods of Orange, Delaware, Ulster, Greene and dozens of other counties that could be named in New York State alone, that are plentiful and good to eat. All Pennsylvania and every Midland State is full of such squirrels, opossums, raccoons, chipmunks, hares, jays, robins, none very shy and only needing patience and a sure aim to bring them down.

To acquire the art of shooting game with the bow and arrow is by no means a matter of great difficulty to a healthy boy with good eyesight. As Maurice Thompson suggests, targets are of little use to shoot at as practice for game practice. A rubber ball suspended from a string under a tree in front of a high bank of soft earth is the proper target for the would-be archer.

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